Misuari HQ a bomb factory, AFP discovers

Story Below, Col. 5

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2001 ★★ 100 PAGES 10 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 356 P15

'Still the same Gloria'

♫... AM I THE SAME GIRL?
YES I AM, YES I AM!

By Carlito Pablo

SHE'S still the same Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo the people put in power in January. Or so, the President, plagued with at least three controversies, sought to convince

STILL/ A6

IN *Saturday* SPECIAL

- Move over Harry Potter—here comes Elijah Wood as Frodo Baggins
- MTV Philippines has two new VJs
- Sundance names films in 2002 competition

WOOD

Gloria favors new coco deal

Dante Ang role as intermediary denounced

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL cuts a striking figure as she pays tribute to Andres Bonifacio, the Father of the Philippine Revolution on his 138th birthday on Friday, at the Bonifacio Shrine at the Manila City Hall, Taft Avenue, Manila. *(Story on Page A3.)*

EDWIN BACASMAS

By Carlito Pablo,
Armand Nocum,
Donna S. Cueto
and Gerald Lacuarta

WITHOUT directly saying that it was endorsing the proposed "compromise settlement" that President Macapagal-Arroyo's private publicist, Dante Ang, had brokered, Malacañang yesterday said it favored freeing P50 billion from the coconut levy funds now amounting to P130 billion and putting it into a perpetual trust fund to rehabilitate the coconut industry.

Creating a P50-billion perpetual trust fund whose interest will go to coconut farmers and the coconut industry is part of the compromise settlement signed by farmers' groups, the Philippine Coconut Producers' Federation (Cocofed) and businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. on Sept. 27.

Ang told the Inquirer that he acted as "referee" to work out the agreement that would finally free the levy funds from decades of disputed ownership.

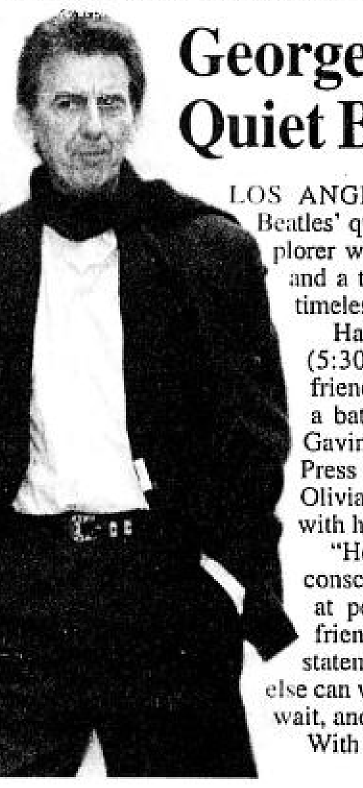
Like the deal itself, Ang's brokering has been met with suspicions and denunciations from various sectors including some members of the House of Representatives.

"Who is Dante Ang and who gave him the authority to broker a deal?" demanded Rep. Etta Rosales (Akbayan partylist).

"What is his mandate? He could not possibly be representing just

GLORIA/ A6

"WE had the time of our lives. We laughed for years," Harrison said of the Beatlemania that swept the world in the '60s. In 1968, file photo shows the Beatles at their prime from left, Paul McCartney, John Lennon, Ringo Starr and George Harrison. (Below) Harrison in London in 1998 after he had been diagnosed of cancer but had discovered that "the search for God cannot wait."



George Harrison, Quiet Beatle, is dead

LOS ANGELES—George Harrison, the Beatles' quiet lead guitarist and spiritual explorer who added both rock 'n' roll flash and a touch of the mystic to the band's timeless magic, has died. He was 58.

Harrison died at 1:30 p.m. Thursday (5:30 a.m. Friday in Manila) at a friend's Los Angeles home following a battle with cancer, longtime friend Gavin de Becker told The Associated Press late Thursday. Harrison's wife, Olivia Harrison, and son Dhani, 24, were with him.

"He left this world as he lived in it, conscious of God, fearless of death, and at peace, surrounded by family and friends," the Harrison family said in a statement. "He often said, 'Everything else can wait but the search for God cannot wait, and love one another.'"

With Harrison's death, there remain two

GEORGE/ A20

Erap to have eye surgery to remove cataract, cyst

By Alcuin Papa
and Volt Contreras

JAILED ex-President Joseph Estrada said yesterday he was scheduled for an operation on Dec. 16 at the Rockwell Center's Asian Eye Institute (AEI) to remove a cataract and a cyst from his left eye.

Estrada arrived at the AEI at about 2:20 p.m. yesterday for the court-approved check-up with a team of specialists led by Dr. Amado Veloso.

Estrada, who failed to convince the Sandiganbayan to allow him to go to the United States for the eye operation, emerged from the examination after two hours and pronounced himself impressed with the facilities of the AEI.

ERAP/ A20

Atong no VIP in '5-star' jail

By Chandler E. Ramas III
Contributor

LAS VEGAS—Charlie "Atong" Ang is not getting special treatment as a prisoner in this US gambling capital—and by Philippine prisons' standards, that's five-star stuff.

The rich and powerful friend of ousted President Joseph Estrada is getting the same attention as the other prisoners at the North Las Vegas Detention Center. That basically means three hot meals a day, exercise, medical checkups, shopping and movies in the weekends.

"We are a pretty big facility and we take good care of our inmates," said Capt. Daniel Lake, administrative captain of the prison.

Ang is not exactly locked up in a cell. He is housed in an "open dormitory"—a sprawling room with bunk beds arranged in rows—that he shares with about 50 other inmates.

He will most likely remain there, or he may be moved to another detention center until he is deported back to Manila.

Ang is wanted in the Philippines for alleged involvement in shady

ATONG/ A20

Osama bin Laden can't run forever–Bush

KABUL—Advances by US-led forces in Afghanistan have left top terror suspect Osama bin Laden less room to hide, US officials said, as negotiators for the country's rival factions closed in on a historic power-sharing deal.

"We've narrowed the amount of space inside Afghanistan that he feels safe in," US Vice President Dick Cheney said in an interview with ABC News late Thursday.

President George W. Bush said the suspected terrorist leader and his al-Qaida followers are on the run, "but they can't run forever."

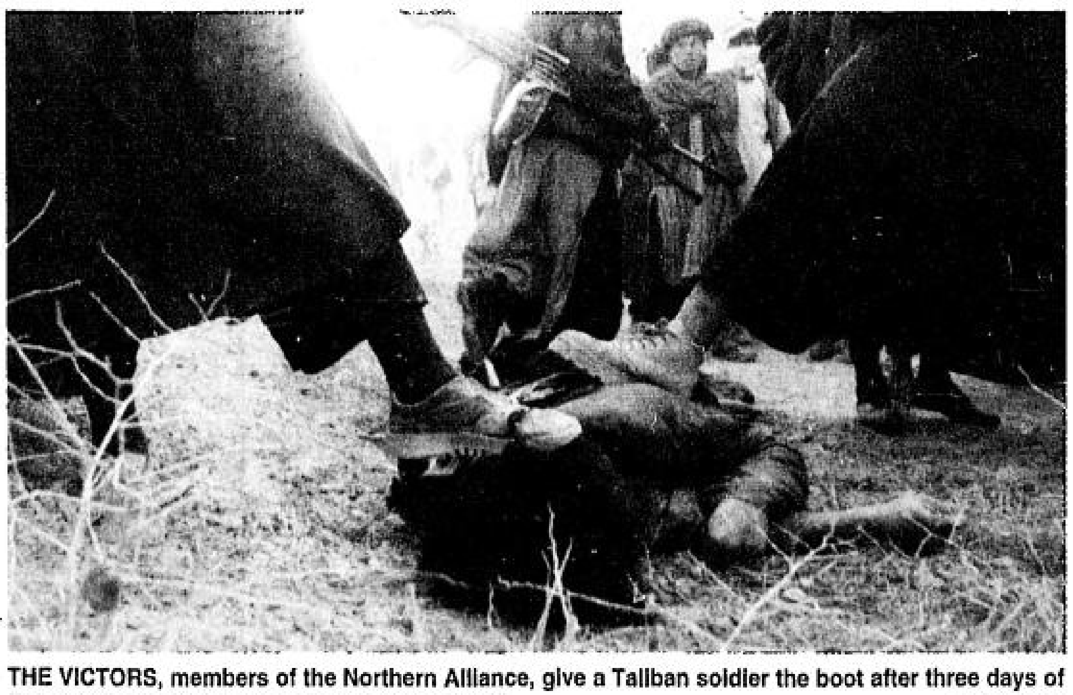
Asked about reports that Bin Laden was hiding in a maze of elaborate caves near Tora Bora in the east of Afghanistan, Cheney responded: "I think he's still in Afghanistan. I think he's probably in that general area."

Cheney said Bin Laden likely had a large number of fighters with him but did not reveal specific intelligence information to that effect. He hailed improved technology allowing US officials to zero in on Bin Laden's whereabouts.

Bin Laden and his al-Qaida terror network are the chief suspects in the Sept. 11 suicide plane attacks on US cities that left some 3,700 dead and prompted the launch of a US-led military retaliation on Oct. 7 against the Taliban militia, which has harbored Bin Laden.

As representatives of the rival Afghan factions prepared for a fourth day of talks in Germany on Friday, Northern Alliance forces

OSAMA/ A20



THE VICTORS, members of the Northern Alliance, give a Taliban soldier the boot after three days of fighting at the prison fortress at Mazar-e-sharif.

GETTY IMAGES

Misuari HQ a bomb factory, AFP finds out

By Julie S. Alipala
and Rolly A. San Juan
PDI Mindanao Bureau

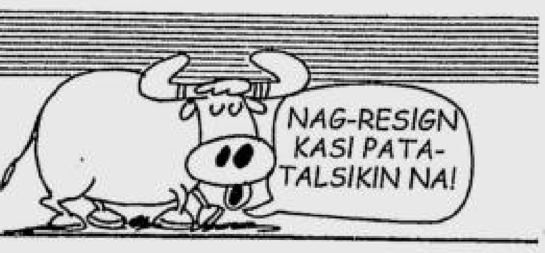
ZAMBOANGA CITY—Nur Misuari, the suspended governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, used the Cabatangan Complex as a factory of explosives, according to the chief of the Armed Forces' Southern Command.

"I no longer consider this an ARMM complex," Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu said yesterday. "It is a sanctuary, a camp, a laboratory or factory of explosives. The capture of this camp has averted a bigger conflagration here and elsewhere."

Cimatu said the Southcom had recovered from the complex five gallons of improvised anti-personnel and armor mines, 200 kilos of improvised explosives, 600 electronic blasting caps, 200 meters of electrical wire, 300 grams of black

MISUARI/ A21

Second FRONT PAGE


NAG-RESIGN KASI PATA-TALSIKIN NA!

'I quit'; 'No, you're fired'

BUSINESSMAN Pacifico "Pic" Marcelo III yesterday said there was no need for Malacañang to fire him as member of the board of directors of the government-sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat).

"I resigned from the board effective Nov. 21 upon reaching a decision to tell the Senate and the public the truth on the telecommunications franchise scandal," Marcelo, who accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of trying to take over his telecommunications company, said in a statement.

But Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Marcelo was not being honest when he claimed that he resigned on Nov. 21 or five days before he submitted his controversial affidavit to the Senate.

Tiglao said Philcomsat received Marcelo's resignation letter only on Nov. 29. "It was immediately accepted," he said.

Tiglao had earlier said that Marcelo became a member of the Philcomsat board of directors because of his ties to Jaime Dichaves, an associate of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Marcelo said the position was offered to him by then Transportation and Communications Secretary Vicente Rivera.

Tiglao said the businessman could not cover up his association with Dichaves and Estrada.

Estrada crony

"Mr. Marcelo foolishly thought he could wipe his tracks as a crony of Estrada," Tiglao said.

Marcelo said Malacañang's effort to use his seat on the Philcomsat board to link him to Dichaves "is a crude form of dishonesty that can only come from parties doing everything in character assassination."

Marcelo had earlier admitted having been a consultant to Dichaves but denied that the latter had any interest in the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI) and APC Wireless Interface Network.

These are the companies whose congressional franchises were vetoed by Ms Macapagal.

In a 12-page sworn statement submitted to the Senate, Marcelo claimed that Ms Macapagal demanded a 51-percent stake in PCCI, which, he said, stood to earn at least $1 billion in annual revenues as a telecommunications clearinghouse.

Ms Macapagal denied this accusation and Malacañang charged that Marcelo was acting as an "attack dog" of the opposition.

Marcelo said efforts to connect him to Estrada "is intended to give political color to a crime violating people's trust."

"But these are surely desperate moves that can only come from people clutching at straws as the truth will surely triumph over the lies," Marcelo said.

In his affidavit, Marcelo also alleged that the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had canceled contracts with Northern Pacific Link Corp. (NPLC) because of pressures from Malacañang.

The contracts called for the setting up of 30,000 card payphones in Luzon, including Metro Manila, and maintaining PLDT's existing payphones. Marcelo is an NPLC director.

PLDT denial

A PLDT official said Marcelo was not telling the truth.

Claro Ramirez, PLDT senior vice president, belied "the allegation that PLDT, acting in concert with certain Malacañang officials, is pressuring Mr. Marcelo to agree to the cancellation of the agreements between PLDT and NPLC."

Marcelo identified Ramirez as the one who informed him that PLDT was rescinding the contract because of pressure from Malacañang through lawyer Pancho Villaraza of the Carpio, Villaraza, Cruz law office.

In a letter to NPLC president Voltaire Alcantara, Ramirez said the "allegation is completely without basis in fact and in law and is being circulated by unscrupulous individuals in order to obfuscate the real reason behind PLDT's cancellation of the agreements."

"The agreements were canceled by PLDT due to NPLC's inability and failure to comply with the conditions within the 30-day period required under our demand letter dated Sept. 5, 2001," Ramirez said.

He said the decision was arrived at after "exhaustive deliberation and consultation with our external legal counsel, SyCip, Salazar, Hernandez and Gatmaitan."

Ramirez sent the letter to Alcantara as part of his answer to Marcelo's allegations.

The Accra law firm, meanwhile, denied that it prepared the affidavit that Marcelo submitted to the Senate.

"The truth is that Mr. Pacifico Marcelo III is not known to us; he is not and never has been our client; and none of our lawyers had any participation in the preparation of his affidavit against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," Victor P. Lazatin, Accra law firm managing partner, said in a letter to the INQUIRER.

In the Senate, opposition senator Blas Ople asked the Philippine National Police to provide security to Marcelo because of Senate President Franklin Drilon's refusal to put him into the custody of the Senate.

Ople said the PNP should help protect the rights of Marcelo, a witness to the Senate investigation of the telecommunications franchise controversy.

Drilon has refused to put Marcelo under Senate custody because his affidavit implicating Ms Macapagal in the franchise scam has yet to be evaluated by the Senate blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo. Drilon said the Senate was not a protection agency.

Report from Carlito Pablo, Rocky Nazareno and Cynthia D. Balana

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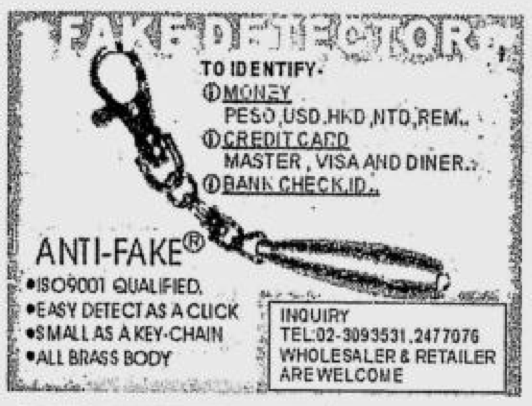

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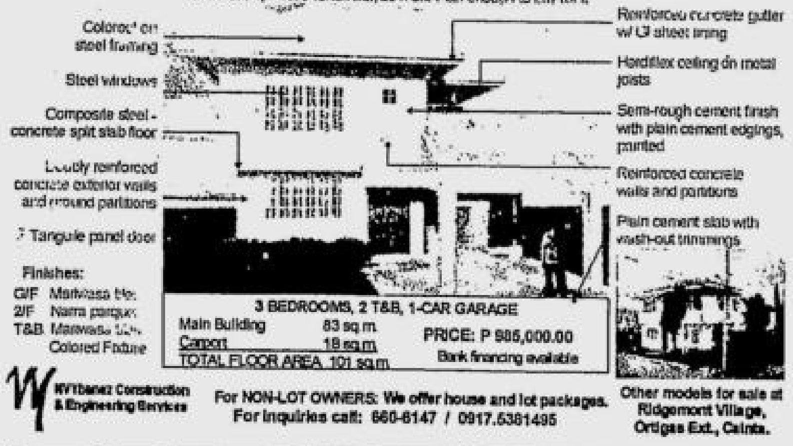
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'UNORTHODOX BEHAVIOR'

Analyze Badoy, Erap lawyer asks SC

By Volt Contreras

THE SUPREME Court should look into the "unorthodox behavior" of Sandiganbayan Justice Anacleto Badoy which "casts the judiciary in a bad light" and could damage the institution, lawyer Rene Saguisag said yesterday.

Saguisag, a member of the team defending jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada from plunder charges which Badoy is trying, said the Supreme Court should have a rule for behavior like Badoy's "who's drawing attention to himself but keeps shooting himself in the foot."

He used the Taglish term AIM (*ayaw ibigay ang mike*, meaning refusing to yield the microphone) for a videoke patron who relishes always being the center of attention.

Saguisag was reacting to Badoy's surprise appearance on the GMA 7 "Saksi" program late Thursday where he accused one of his staffers of stealing a draft ruling on the Estrada plunder case which is before the 3rd Division which Badoy heads.

Badoy, who was reportedly showing signs of heavy stress that day, had himself brought to the TV station by ambulance and all but volunteered to be interviewed by the news anchor.

"He should have just filed a complaint and let a quiet investigation take its course, instead of maligning someone over the airwaves," Saguisag said.

Thursday's incident gave the Estrada camp a fresh angle from which to again question Badoy's capacity to handle the plunder trial.

Badoy has rejected twice the defense panel's motion that he inhibit himself from the case because of alleged bias. The motion has been elevated to the Supreme Court.

"He definitely needs a vacation, or he's going to kill himself from overwork," said Saguisag.

He said Badoy, who looked "listless and suffering from lack of sleep" on TV, was apparently just overreacting to the alleged document theft, Saguisag said.

"A draft is really nothing. All you do is prepare another if one goes missing. You don't get overly wrought as though it was a will or a piece of evidence that went missing," he said.

The alleged theft ''only showed that he (Badoy) has no control over his own staff,'' said Saguisag.

GMA promises more benefits, no demolition

By D. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday promised workers she will find ways to increase their non-wage benefits and generate more jobs, while to the urban poor she promised a moratorium on the demolition of squatter shanties on government lands.

Speaking at rites commemorating revolutionary hero Andres Bonifacio's 138th birth anniversary, the President also declared 2002 as the centennial of the Philippine labor movement which was founded in 1902 by Isabelo de los Reyes.

In exchange for her promises, Ms Macapagal asked the workers and the poor to support her presidency.

It will be recalled that it was mainly the urban poor, who were loyal supporters of ousted President Joseph Estrada, who stormed Malacañang last May 1 demanding that Ms Macapagal resign.

Although thwarted, the uprising showed the deep discontent the poor had with the present dispensation.

"*Kaya humihingi ako ng inyong tulong* (That is why I'm asking for your help)," Ms Macapagal told the Urban Poor and Labor Assembly at the Folk Arts Theater.

"*Hinihiling ko na ako ay inyong tulungan sa buong panahon na ako ay Pangulo ng ating bansa dahil ito naman ay para sa inyong ikabubuti* (I ask that you help me during my entire term as president because it would be for your own good)," she said.

The assembly was part of the observance of Bonifacio Day.

In the morning, the President laid a wreath at the Bonifacio Shrine beside the Manila City Hall.

The President also promised to improve infrastructure in urban centers to help workers get to their homes and work places faster.

She predicted that Metro Manila will expand into "Mega Manila," to include Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) and Clark and Subic in Pampanga and Zambales, respectively.

"In preparation, we are rushing mass transit projects so that the people could get around Mega Manila faster," she said.

Ms Macapagal also vowed to generate more jobs "that pay a true living wage," citing the information and communications technology fields, and to strengthen programs that would develop workers' skills and preserve jobs.

Ms Macapagal also assured the urban poor that the government will not demolish squatter shanties until it has prepared proper relocation sites.

"*Kaya kung sinong taga*-public works *ang lumabag doon, isumbong ninyo kay* (urban poor leader) Percy Chavez (If any public works official violates this order, report him to Percy Chavez)," she said.

The President said she will soon issue proclamations declaring several government properties as community mortgage program sites.

These are the GSIS properties on D. Ampil St., P. Burgos Ext., Quintin Paredes Ext. and Pureza Interior, all in Sta. Mesa, Manila;

With Ayan C. Mellejor and Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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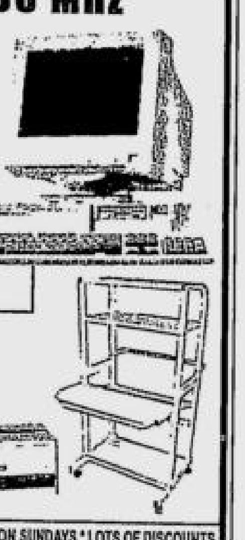

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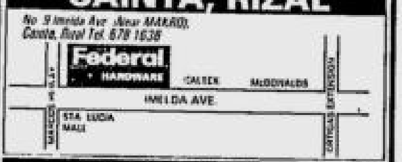

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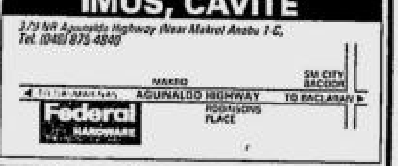

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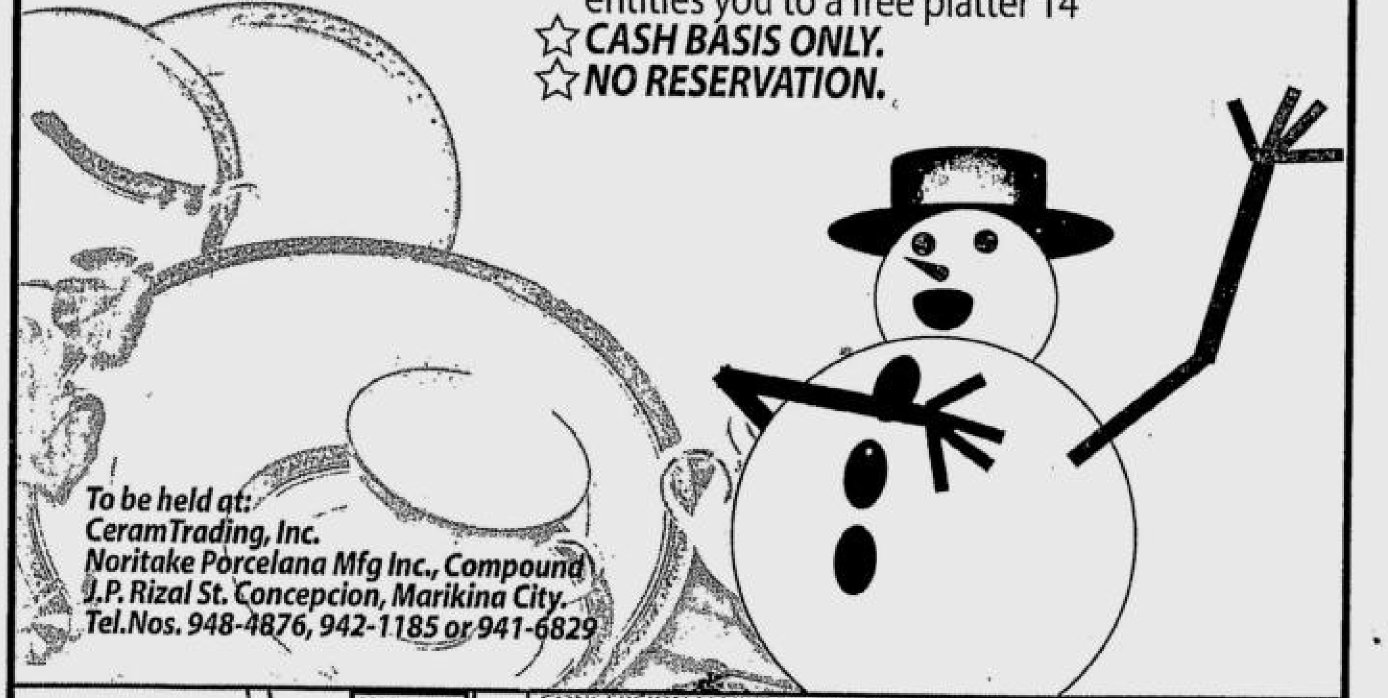

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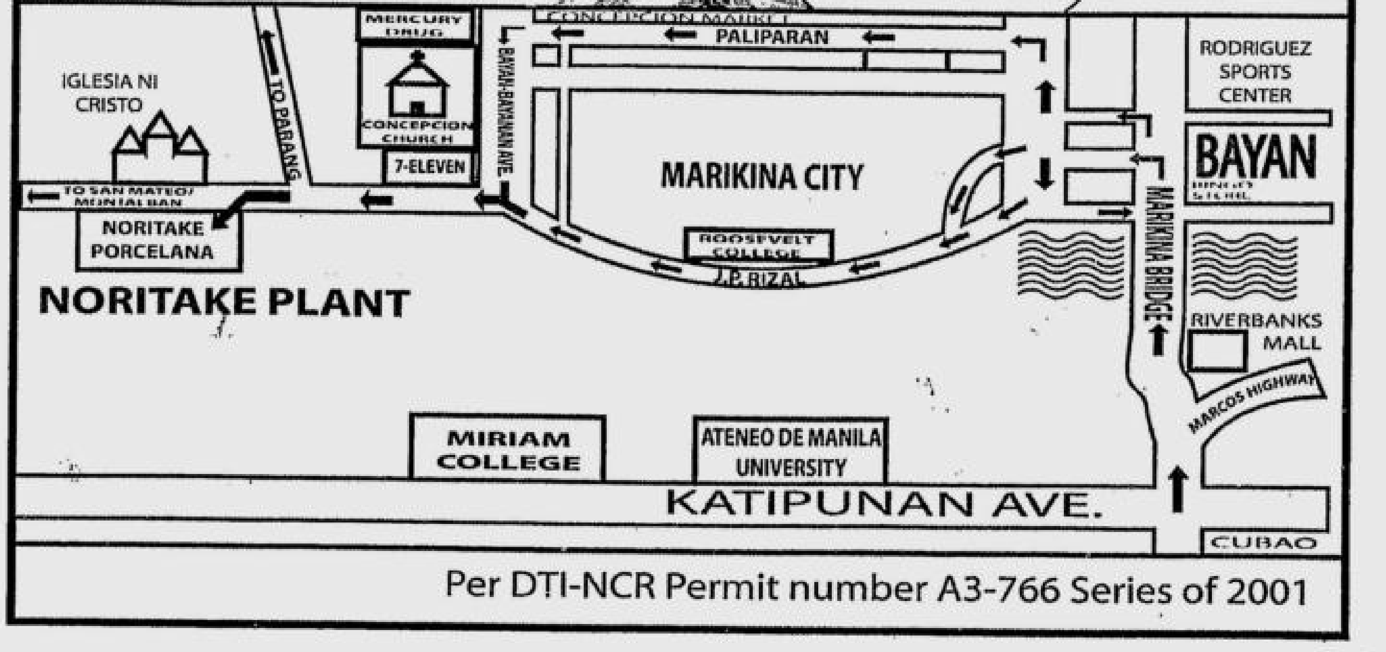

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Senate absentee voting bill includes all Filipinos abroad

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE ABSENTEE voting bill being deliberated upon by a Senate committee will cover all Filipinos overseas, including immigrants and US green card holders.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws, said this is to allow all Filipinos abroad who have kept their citizenship to participate in Philippine elections.

He said the Senate version of the bill would contain a provision categorically stating that the right to vote "shall be extended to all Filipinos who have not given up their citizenship or taken up other citizenship."

The bill's version in the House of Representatives was sponsored by Angara's sister, Rep. Bella Angara-Castillo.

The two measures have the same salient points but differ on minor technical details, which Angara and Castillo said could be easily reconciled.

Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo said he supports the inclusion of immigrants and green card holders in the law, adding that the right to vote belongs to all Filipinos regardless of residence.

The issue of whether immigrants should be allowed to vote was the most contentious during committee deliberations, it was learned.

The technical panel that helped draft the committee report defined an immigrant as one who "wants to continue his old domicile and seek a new one."

That, Angara said, was a powerful argument for including them in the absentee voting law, which would cover 7.3 million overseas Filipinos.

Most of these Filipinos are in the Middle East, neighboring Asian countries and in North America.

Saudi Arabia has the biggest number of Filipino overseas workers, while 71 percent of Filipino immigrants go to the United States.

"The numbers are growing and there is no sign that immigration will slacken," Angara said.

From 1990 to April 2001, overseas Filipinos remitted P43.36 billion through the formal banking system. What was sent through informal sources is undetermined.

Angara said material and financial assistance sent by overseas Filipinos through government agencies and other aid institutions from 1990 to June 2001 totaled P2.8 billion.

"The overseas Filipinos have been the most consistent life-support system of the national economy," Angara said.

The common provisions of the two versions of the proposed absentee voting law are:

- All qualified overseas Filipinos are allowed to register and vote for the positions of president, vice president, senator and party-list representative.
- Registration shall be done directly at embassies and consulates or via mail. The Comelec will process the applications.
- Special boards of canvassers and inspectors shall be created.
- A congressional oversight committee shall be created to monitor implementation of the law.

While the Senate version provides for the counting and canvass of votes to be done at the Comelec offices in Manila, except for a few pilot areas, the House version allows for the same to be done at both the Comelec and Philippine consulates and embassies.

Travel, transport budget to hit P8.1B next year—Recto

MALACAÑANG'S request to increase by P267 million the travel budget of government agencies next year is not helping it change the image that top public officials are "viajeros," Sen. Ralph Recto said yesterday.

In a press statement, Recto called for the rejection of the Palace request as contained in the 2002 proposed budget that funds for "travelling expenses" be hiked from P3.357 this year to P3.624 billion next year.

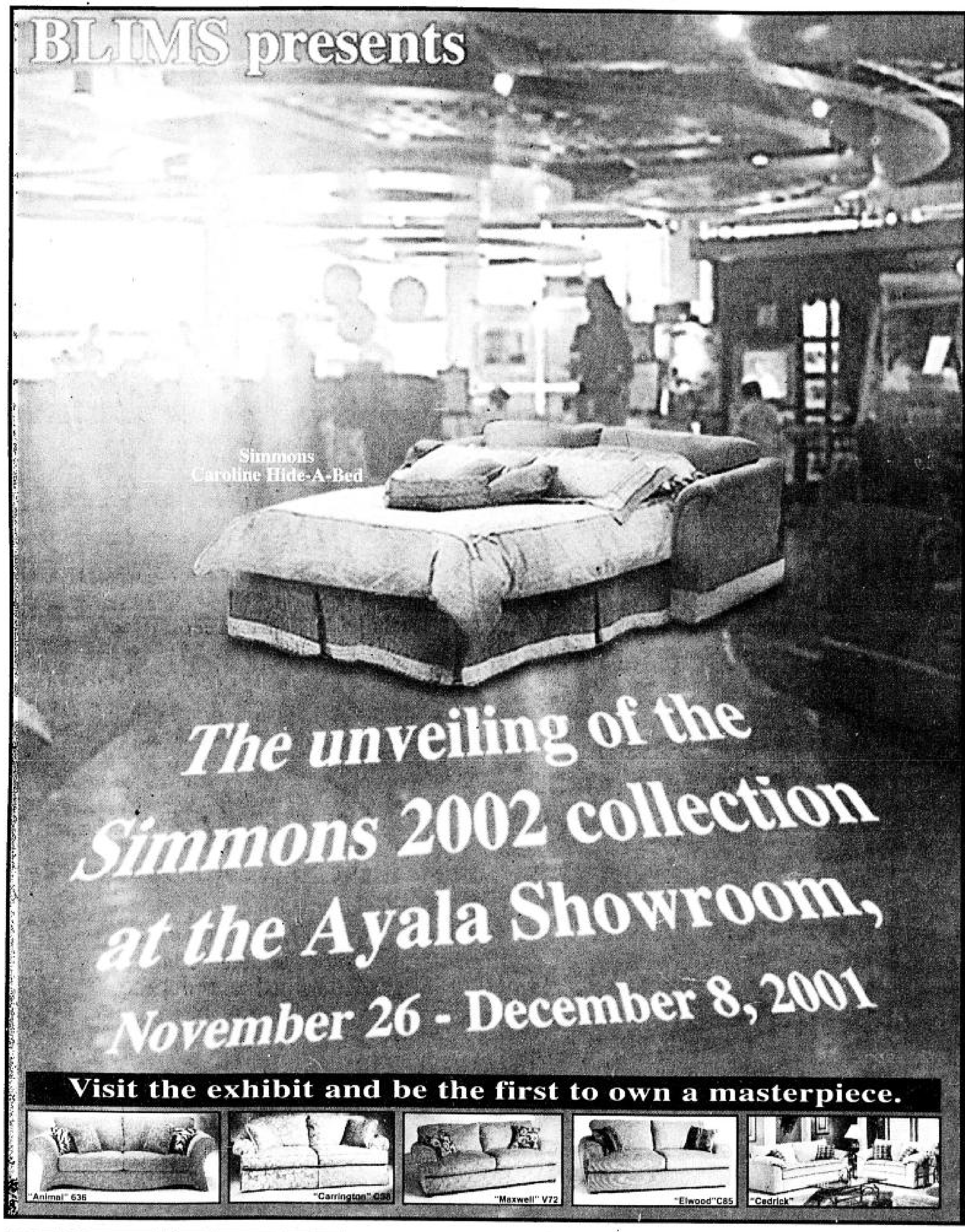
Recto said he will move during the Senate debates on the 2002 budget next week that next year's budget for the domestic and foreign travel of government officials and employees be maintained at the current level.

"We will be spending P10 million a day for travel next year. I think that's more than enough," Recto said.

On top of the P3.624 "travelling expenses" budget that government is seeking for its officials next year, there is also a P903-million budget for the repair of government vehicles and P415-million budget for "transportation services."

The three travel-related expense items are separate from the P3.121 billion proposed allocation for "gas, oil and lubricants."

Thus, the expected total tab to move bureaucrats around next year runs up to P8.1 billion, Recto said.



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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 1, 2001
34th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	*Dn 7:15-27*
Gospel:	*Lk 21:34-36*

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be on your guard; let not your hearts be weighed down with a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you suddenly as a trap. For it will come upon all the inhabitants of the whole earth. But watch at all times and pray, that you may be able to escape all that is bound to happen and to stand before the Son of Man."

Commentary:

Today marks the end of the liturgical year. In the Gospel, Jesus offers us a final advice, that is: Let our minds not be callous. Jesus did not come to solve our problems but to remind us that God has given us the capacity to deal with them. But we must possess a clear mind and a willing heart, since nothing is solved automatically; and much less if, like the ostrich, we simply bury our heads to get away from it all. While it is true that we are not entirely free, we can and we ought make the most of the little freedom we have to become masters of our lives. We are God's children and He created us that we may enjoy this freedom.

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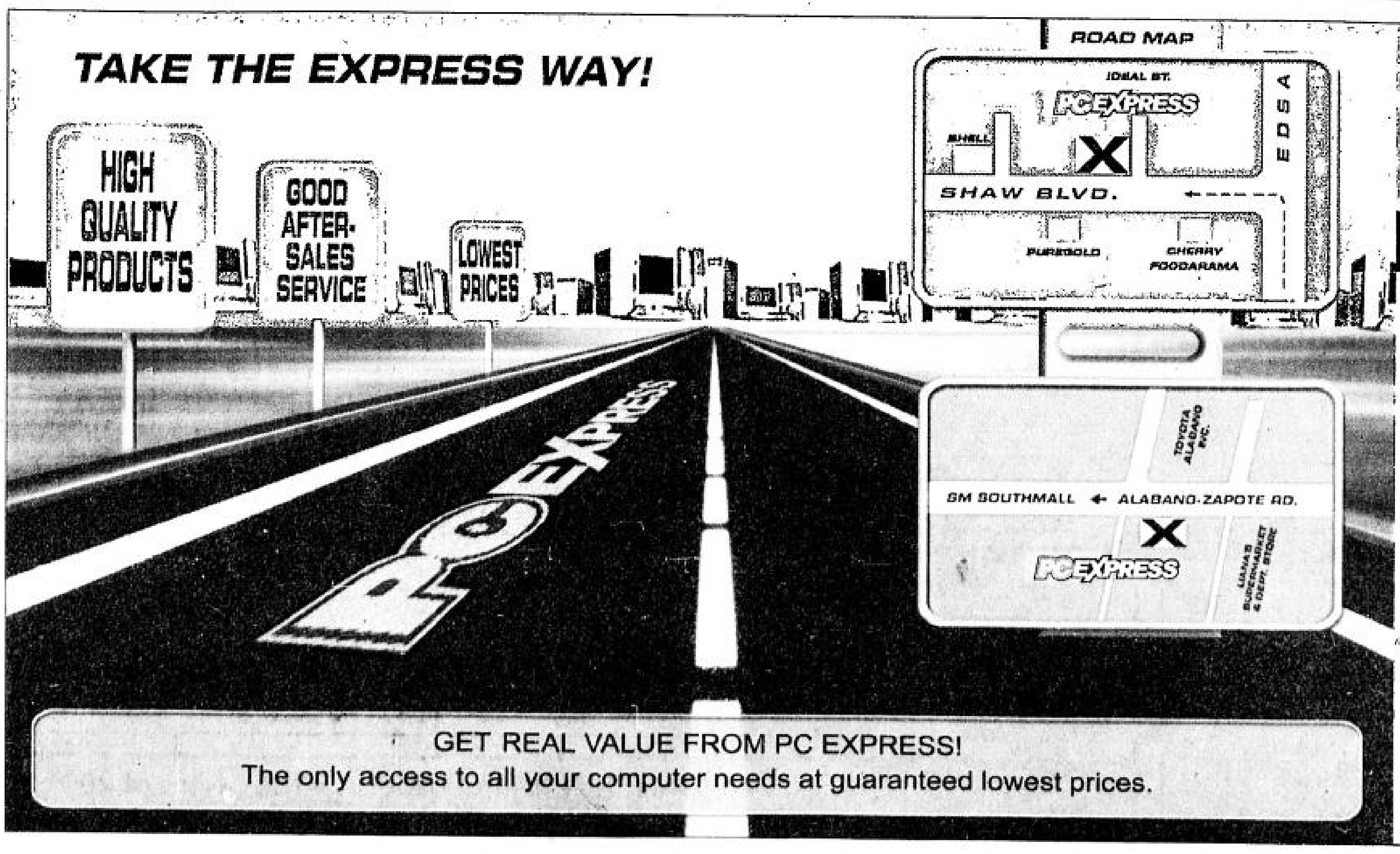
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Forum shopping; sanctions—Forum shopping has been characterized as an act of malpractice that is prohibited and condemned as trifling with the courts and abusing their processes. It constitutes improper conduct, which tends to degrade the administration of justice. It has also been aptly described as deplorable because it adds to the congestion of the heavily burdened dockets of the courts. In petitioner's deliberate attempt to obtain the same reliefs in 2 different courts, he was obviously shopping for a "friendly" forum, which would capitulate to his improvident plea for a temporary restraining order and was thus trifling with the judicial process. Revised Circular No. 28-91 provides these pertinent sanctions for forum shopping: (a) summary dismissal of the multiple petitions; and, (b) direct contempt of court. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Bellosillo, Second Division, Tantoy, Jr. v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 141427, April 20, 2001]

Digest by R.B. Vera



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Probe credit card 'racket,' Ople asks BSP

By Cynthia D. Balana

SEN. Blas Ople yesterday asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to regulate the "usurious" lending rates of credit card companies and make them conform to the official bank lending rate.

Speaking at a press conference, Ople said the average lending rate of credit card companies was 3.5 percent per month, or a total of 42 percent annually.

He said this was excessive when compared to the banks' annual lending rate, which ranges from 18 to 22 percent.

Ople said that the credit card companies have been reaping huge profits from interest alone.

He said this must be why many credit card firms have been launching promotional offensives to get more clients.

Some credit card companies have been making introductory offers like free memberships, a waiver of first-year fees and relatively lower interest rates to pre-selected clients.

Ople said pawnshops have been imposing the same interest rate but were not as harmful as the collaterals offered, like jewelry, which have limited loan value.

But most credit card holders are given fairly high credit limits depending on their ability to pay.

They are allowed to pay only a minimum amount each month, but this represents only the interest payments on their debt.

"Considering the big number of credit card holders and the high interest rate on their loans, credit card companies have been making a killing at the expense of their clients," Ople said.

He said the BSP should fix a reasonable level of interest rate that card companies should be allowed to charge their members.

"We need to protect card holders from usurious interest rates," Ople said.

NEWSBRIEFS

No Cabinet revamp, yet

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo said she will evaluate the performance of her Cabinet officials before the end of the year to find out if they had reached the targets she had set. But she also said she is not yet thinking of a revamp. "Well, December is the time when we look at our targets . . . We're always examining how targets are being met. That's part of governance," she said in an ambush interview at the University of the Philippines yesterday. "I have no offhand plan for a (Cabinet) revamp," she added, in response to a question. Ms Macapagal laid out specific "performance targets" during her first State of the Nation Address last July. She had said she will focus on food security, agricultural modernization, mass housing, education and job generation to boost the economy. She also promised a million jobs in the agriculture sector within three years. *Dona Pazzibugan*

Impeach rap vs Ani

THE HOUSE committee on justice will convene next week to discuss the fate of the impeachment complaint filed against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, its chair said yesterday. Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan, chair of the House committee on justice, said that the body has tentatively set its meeting for Wednesday next week. "We have to let our members first read the complaint," Libanan told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. "That's why I gave instructions (to justice committee staff) to furnish our members copies of the complaint filed against Desierto. Libanan said he has already read the complaint filed by lawyer Ernesto Francisco Jr., who accused Desierto of taking a bribe in 1997 from his ex-client, businessman Luke Roxas, in exchange for sitting on the investigation of a case involving the latter's bank. Desierto and Roxas have denied Francisco's claims. Libanan said under the newly-approved rules on the conduct of impeachment proceedings in the 12th Congress, his 45-member committee has 60 session days to complete its work. The complaint against Desierto was finally referred to Libanan's committee last Wednesday. *Christine O. Avendano*

Oreta: Heads should roll

SEN. Teresa Aquino-Oreta yesterday demanded the resignation of Interior Secretary Jose Lina and Justice Secretary Hernando Perez following the major slip-up by the Philippine National Police in the investigation of the murder of movie actress Nida Blanca. According to Oreta, the two Cabinet officials should assume command responsibility for the bungling of the government case against the husband of Blanca after Philip Medel Jr. retracted his statement. Medel had claimed that he was tortured by the PNP into admitting to the crime and pointing to Rod Strunk, husband of Blanca, as the mastermind. Oreta said Perez and Lina "fell over each other trying to hog the best camera angles when Medel was rashly presented to the media last week." "The issue here is that devoid of strong evidence backed by solid investigative work, these honorable secretaries have nonetheless presented the alleged killer to the media and prematurely declared the case closed, if only to win 'pogi' points and grab the headlines," she said. Oreta also said that Medel's recantation only showed the urgent need for Congress to pass her proposed Senate Bill 874 which seeks to stop the practice of presenting to the public suspects in any criminal investigation before formal charges have been filed against them in court. *Cynthia D. Balana*

2 blacklisted Koreans

IMMIGRATION authorities yesterday foiled the second attempt of two blacklisted Koreans from getting into the country despite getting the services of a human smuggling syndicate said to be operating at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Immigration senior intelligence officer Rudy David said the syndicate tried to smuggle Koreans Sung King Chul and Shim Jae Young by escorting them through the smuggling ring's contacts inside Naia. The syndicate had tried earlier to "facilitate" the entry of the two Koreans at the new Centennial Terminal, but failed. It made a similar attempt this time at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 1. David said that the two blacklisted Koreans arrived on board a Korean Airlines flight from Inchong, South Korea, as transit passengers. The two foreigners admitted paying a "huge sum of money" to the syndicate. The two were later forced to board a return Korean Airlines flight to Inchong. *Norman Bordadora*

Marian symposium in Pasig

LEGIONARIES from the parishes of San Juan, Makati, Mandaluyong, Taguig, Pasig and Pateros, which comprise the Makati North and South Comitia of the Legion of Mary, will gather for a Marian symposium today at the Sta. Clara de Montefalco parish on C. Raymundo Avenue, Caniogan, Pasig City. The symposium, which is also open to Marian members of other church organizations, will be held at 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Speakers and their topics are Fr. Itoy Ignacio of San Carlos Seminary in Guadalupe ("Mary in the Catholic Church Catechism"); Fr. Roland Mactal of UST ("Mary in the Second Vatican Council"); and Fr. Renier Llorca of Sta. Clara parish ("Mary in the Scriptures"). For inquiries, call 642-3555 or 642-1475.

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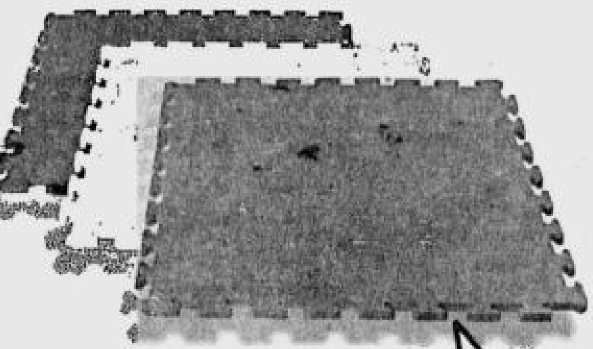

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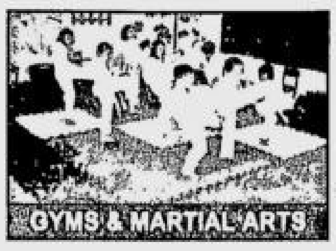

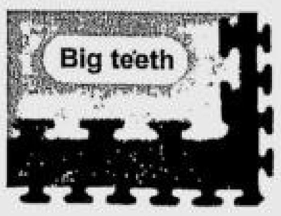

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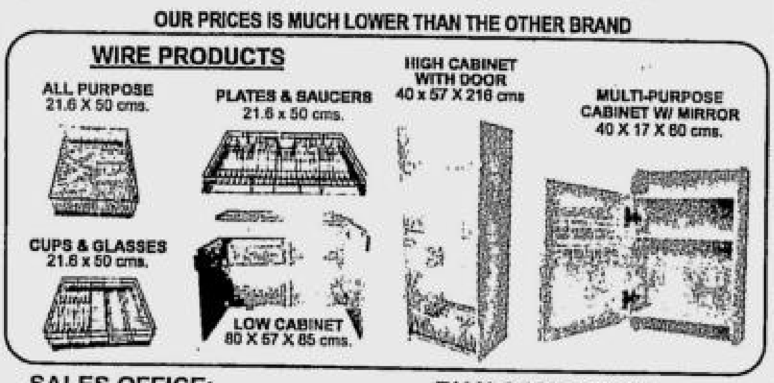
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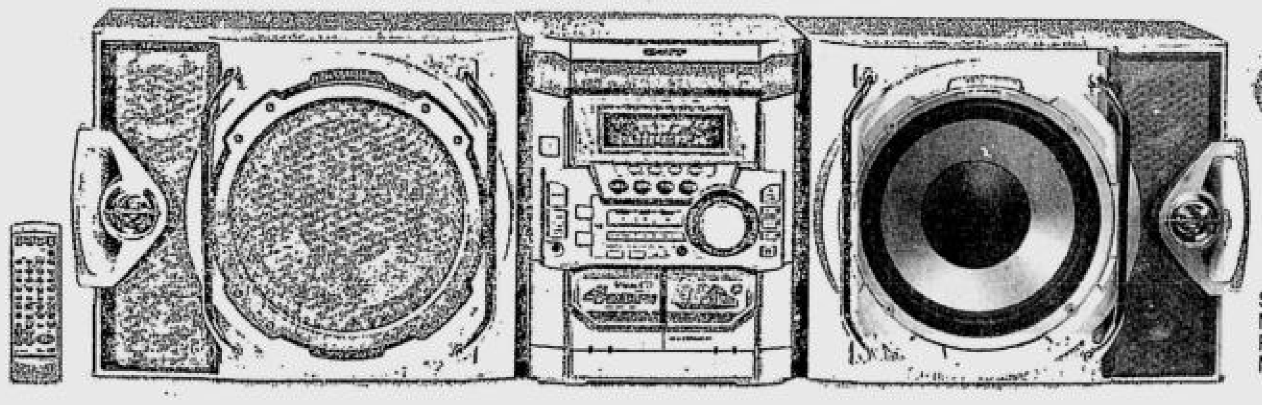

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Gloria favors new coco deal

(From page A1)

himself so the finger of suspicion would naturally point to Malacanang," she added.

The President's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao explained on Wednesday that Ang was not representing the Palace but that it would welcome his feedback on the intentions of the farmers' groups.

Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran questioned Ang's right to act as intermediary on behalf of the government in negotiations regarding the coconut farmers' funds.

Beltran said, "Evidently, Ang is more than just a publisher and a media owner, performing secret functions with the blessings of the President of the Republic," he said.

Bill to block deal

Rosales along with Reps. Rafael P. Nantes (Quezon, LP), Del R. De Guzman (Marikina City, Lakas) and Ted Failon (Leyte, Ind.) yesterday vowed to block any compromise settlement of the coconut levy funds and are set to file a bill on Monday declaring the funds public.

They said that making the coco levy funds public by legislation would end all legal disputes about ownership of the fund, mandate that these be used exclusively for the rehabilitation of the coconut industry and prevent the government from entering into any settlement with Cojuangco.

The Presidential Commission on Good government which had sequestered the levy funds during the Aquino administration, expressed surprise over the deal forged by Ang. It also said it would block a compromise agreement that would not recognize the public character of the coco levy.

Shielding GMA

The Philippine Consultative Assembly's secretary general Linda Montayre said the entry of Ang into the picture aimed to shield the President from criticisms over the coco levy deal.

She also questioned why Philippine Coconut Authority Director Efren Villaseñor represented the farmers in the Sept.27 agreement. "Villaseñor as a government official carries the official government line, especially the President's line," she said.

Montayre had earlier accused the President of pulling out the Philippine Coconut Authority from the agriculture department and placing it directly under her office for the purpose of overseeing the settlement of the levy funds, from which she would allegedly receive a P20-billion commission.

Ang laughed off the accusation, saying the President cannot possibly get P20 billion in a deal involving more than P50 billion.

Montayre also said Ang's overt defense of the President is intended to "draw the deal away from Malacañang because it can always claim, as it had already done, that Ang's act is a private effort."

In a radio interview, Ang countered that he had come forward as he was a witness to the compromise deal and Montayre had been mouthing "malicious imputations" that have no basis in fact. "She's hitting people who have no participation in the agreement," Ang said.

Sharing scheme

Under the agreement, 20 percent of the interest will go to Cocofed, 15 percent to the trust fund and 40 percent to the farmers and the rest to the government. The money for the trust fund will come from the 27-percent shares in San Miguel Corp. which now stands at P50 billion.

"The funds can be held in escrow while the courts have yet to decide whether the funds are public or private in character. In the meantime, proceeds or interest of this fund can be used to benefit the farmers without touching the principal amount," Tiglao said.

He said Malacañang was also "studying other proposals" on the coconut levy funds.

Private funds

Cocofed head Maria Clara Lobregat, Zamboanga City mayor, asserted that the coco levy funds were "private funds" and that farmers who entered into a deal with her group had agreed to consider it as such.

Lobregat said it was only in declaring the funds private that the farmers could hope to put it in a "perpetual trust fund" and earn interest from it.

"It's really private funds. If it's not private, that will go to government and nobody will be sharing anything," Lobregat said of the more than P50 billion Coconut Industry Investment Fund, which constitutes 27 percent of San Miguel Corp.

The proposed compromise settlement is still subject to the approval of the President, and later by the PCGG, and the Sandiganbayan, which is hearing cases related to the ownership of the funds.

The levy was collected as a forced tax on coconut farmers from 1973 to 1982. An initial P15 levy per 100 kilograms of copra was imposed starting Aug. 10, 1973.

Formula

Ms Macapagal said, "the issue is not whether it's a public or private fund."

"It is not the legality. It is how can we use the funds to help the farmers. That's the most important thing," she said.

The President said she was looking for a formula to use the funds without touching on whether the funds were public as claimed by farmers or private as claimed by Cocofed.

Ms Macapagal said her principal concern was "what's the best way by which we can bring those funds to help the poor."

The President said that while she could issue an executive order in connection with the levy issue, "my EO will be superfluous because it will be premised on whether the money is public or private and this same issue will be a prejudicial question to any executive order."

Ms Macapagal noted that the Supreme Court had earlier issued an opinion that the levy funds were imbued with public interest, although this fell short of a definitive ruling on its public character.

The high court, in turn, left it to the Sandiganbayan to decide on the nature of the funds.

The President said there must be a formula that "respects this (Supreme Court) ruling that it's imbued with public interest and yet it will not be questioned before the courts."

"But in the meantime it doesn't stop me from finding a formula that respects it being imbued with public interest and yet we will not be sued," she said.

Tiglao noted that the government could not just declare the coco levy funds as public funds because this would invite legal action from the Cocofed.

Left out of deal

A militant group said coconut farmers in Southern Tagalog could not be party to the deal as they were left out of it.

"The legitimate farmers, especially from Quezon province, should be one of the parties to the negotiations with the government regarding the proper disposal of the disputed fund," Orlando Marcellana, Kasama-TK chair, said in a statement.

Marcellana said big landlords like Cojuangco and Lobregat should not lobby for the settlement of the farmers' money.

"Our hands are basically tied because it would have to be the parties coming to an agreement with the PCGG endorsing it for approval by the Sandiganbayan," Tiglao said in a phone interview.

"With Haydee Yorac as PCGG chair, you would expect that she will not agree to any agreement that will favor certain vested interests," Tiglao said.

Public funds

"Any discussion with all parties about the coco levy should start with the acceptance that these are public funds, whether it's from Dante Ang or Atong Ang," PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza said.

Carranza said that the PCGG and the Office of the Solicitor General would continue to litigate the coco levy cases.

Asked whether the leaders of more than 20 major farmers' groups that met with her in Davao City shared the view that the funds were private, Lobregat said they did.

"Yes, how can they share it with us if it is not private," she said.

She explained that if the funds were declared public, then Congress and not the farmers would have a say on how it would be spent.

She confirmed entering into a deal with the farmers, represented by Efren Villaseñor, as they were all tired of "fighting" over the funds for the past 15 years.

Ang said the farmers agreed to the settlement when they were assured that the issue of whether to declare it public or private fund was better left to the courts to decide.

Ang said the deal would also result in the conduct of a "joint audit" by private groups and the Commission on Audit.

But this is unacceptable for Lobregat. "These are private funds. COA cannot touch it. Let's get a private auditing firm to do it," she said.

Free plane tickets

The National Federation of Small Coconut Farmers Organizations Inc. (NFSCFO) said the deal signed on Sept. 27 in Davao City was dubious as the farmers who attended the meeting could have been misled by the organizers.

"Only Cojuangco can assemble such a meeting because coconut farmers have no money to even hold a meeting in Manila," NFSCFO consultant Maximo Mendoza said.

"Who spent for the plane tickets of these farmer delegates? It seems that they were just brought to that place," Mendoza said.

Mendoza said a NFSCFO delegate was in the meeting, but only because he was given a free plane ticket.

Mendoza said the group, which financed the Sept. 27 meeting, was also the one which paid for the P4 million, 28-page advertisement in the INQUIRER's Nov. 12 issue.

The ad, an open letter to the President, asked for the resolution of the coconut levy issue so that the funds could be used for programs like community-based oil mills owned by farmers, credit windows at the United Coconut Planters Bank, social incentives and agrarian reform.

"The farmers have no P4 million. Somebody is financing it," Mendoza said.

With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Juliet Labog-Javellana in Manila and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Still . . .

(From page A1)

members of civil society yesterday.

"I am still as honest and a person of integrity as my father—the late President Diosdado Macapagal—was and raised me to be," Ms Macapagal said during her keynote address before a national congress of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (Code NGO).

"I can tell you with a clear conscience that what I was before, . . . that's still the way I am," she added.

That Ms Macapagal would vouch for her own uprightness before Code NGO was not unexpected.

For one, Linda Olaguer-Montayre, who had accused her of holding secret negotiations with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco for a compromise deal on the coconut levy funds in exchange for a P20 billion commission, is the secretary general of the People's Consultative Assembly, a part of what is known as "civil society."

For another, Code NGO, the largest network of non-government organizations in the country, served as the secretariat of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil II) that helped topple Joseph Estrada and put her into power. From its ranks came her appointees to the Cabinet: Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman, Presidential Management Staff head Vicky Garchitorena and Civil Service Commission chair Karina David.

Mike no longer the target

In her speech, Ms Macapagal said she had become the target of her political opponents because the charges leveled against her husband had failed to prosper.

"Now the target is no longer my husband. It is now me, myself," the President said.

She said she was counting on members of civil society, whom she described as the "conscience of society," to continue helping her "be a good president."

"And I know that you will continue to point out what is wrong and call attention to unfulfilled promises," she said.

Ms Macapagal praised Code NGO for not engaging in "cheap sloganeering and fault-finding." It was apparently a reference to Montayre.

"Instead of demagoguery, partisan sales talk or trumped-up charges, what you work on are facts, proposals, programs, new ideas forged in the crucible of enlightened debate," the President said.

"We do not need wild accusations that serve to demoralize the civil service rather than clean up the bureaucracy," she added.

Not spared intrigues

She noted that Code NGO itself was not spared intrigues and had been at the "receiving end of wild accusations" after it was accused of making more than P1 billion in profit from the government's issuance of P10 billion worth of peace bonds.

"I ask you to lead in raising the standards of advocacy once again to the point that we can make government intently listen and become engaged in constructive policy discourse," the President said.

Ms Macapagal said that as Code NGO helped her rise to power, it must also help her achieve her government's goal to overcome the people's poverty.

"You have helped bring this government to power. So we share a common vision," she said.

But, she told Code NGO, "in my heart of hearts and in my conscience, I feel that I am beholden to no one except to God and to the people as a whole."

"I became President on the shoulders of People Power. And so . . . my loyalty is not to any one group but to the entire citizenry," she said.

Her destiny to become president

She said she makes decisions not to gain votes in the 2004 presidential elections.

"All I wish, as I said, on my first working day in Malacañang, is to be a good public servant and a good President," she said.

"The presidency is a matter of destiny. How can I not believe that? Was it not destiny that made me president on Jan. 20?"

The President had also been accused by businessman Pacifico Marcelo III of demanding majority control in his telecommunications company whose congressional franchise she had previously vetoed.

The First Gentleman, on the other hand, allegedly ordered the diversion of funds of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office to bankroll the campaign of four administration candidates during the May senatorial election.

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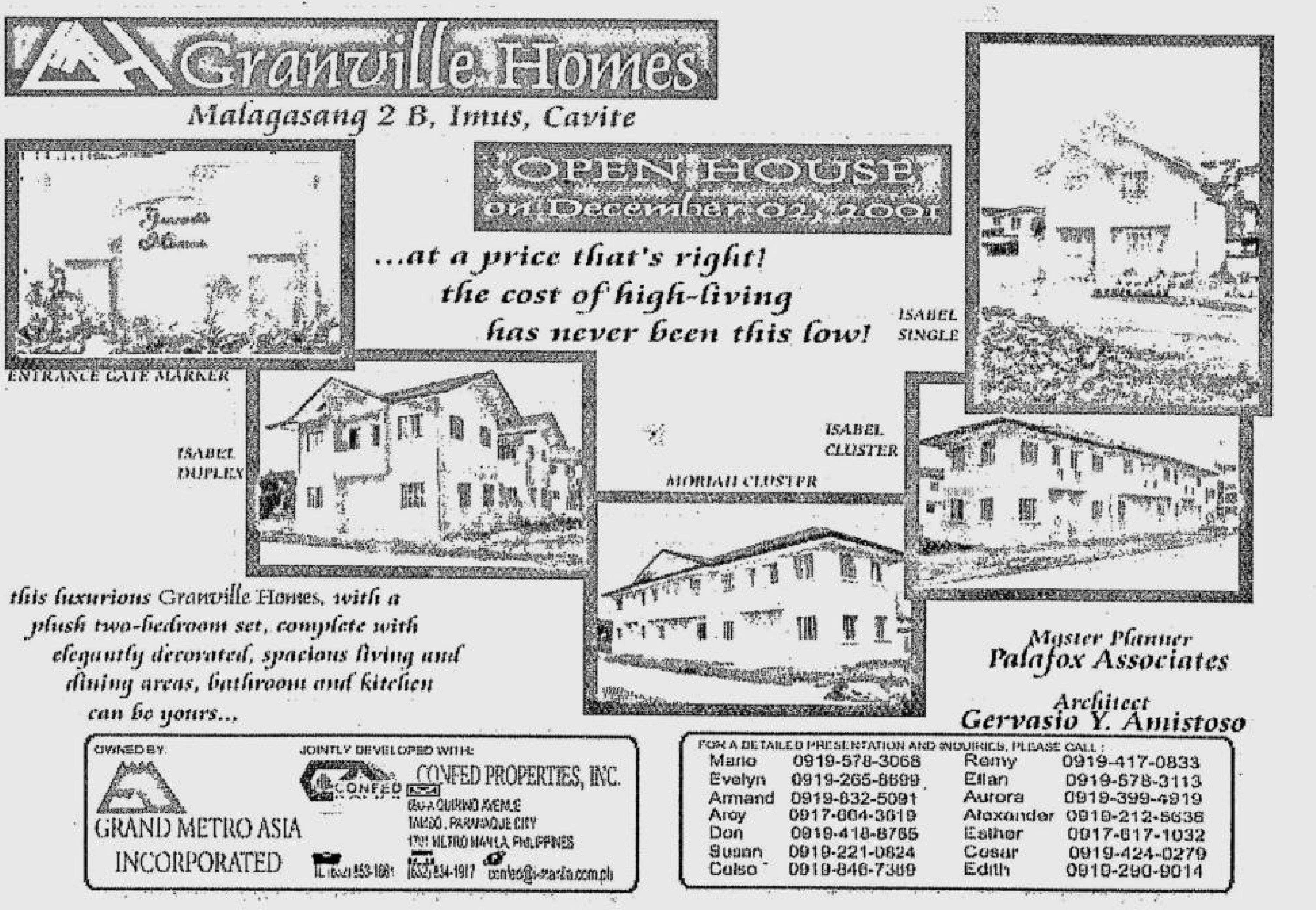

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Men challenged on World Aids Day: 'I care . . . Do You?'

TWELVE more Filipinos, whose ages belong to the most productive years of 17 to 51, have been confirmed carrying the HIV virus, according to a health department report released for the observance of World AIDS Day today.

This year's worldwide AIDS Day theme is "I care . . . Do You?" and is directed at men who are urged to join the battle against AIDS.

The World Health Organization said it is the men who are driving the AIDS epidemic in the Asia-Pacific, which accounted for 70 to 80 percent of all infections worldwide.

"Men need to be part of the solution, not just part of the problem. It is men who can change the direction of the epidemic," said Dr. Shigeru Omi, the WHO's regional director for the Western Pacific.

The new HIV/AIDS-infected Filipinos were reported last October to the National AIDS Centennial surveillance system of the Department of Health.

Of the 12, the DOH said six already show symptoms of terminal-stage HIV/AIDS infections.

Of the new AIDS cases, four are women and two are men. They reported contracting the virus through heterosexual and homosexual contact.

Since January 1984 to October 2001, there were 1,573 HIV/AIDS cases reported in the Philippines, 529 of which were full-blown AIDS cases at the time of the report. The predominant mode of transmission remained sexual intercourse.

There were 229 AIDS deaths during that period.

Everywhere in the Asia-Pacific region, men's sexual behavior and habits have determined the AIDS epidemic's course and extent, the WHO report said.

In Asia, there are often three times as many men infected than women, with the sex industry as the usual epicenter for the epidemic.

But though it is an essentially male epidemic, AIDS programs have not necessarily targeted men, the United Nations body said.

This year's WHO campaign calls on men to become involved in the fight against AIDS, targeting younger men and boys who are at higher risk of infection from HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

"By making young men partners in the fight, we have a better chance of beating this epidemic, and we can also improve the lives of men and their families in the next generation," Omi said.

It has been more than a year since the death of Sarah Jane Salazar, the bar girl who symbolized the scourge of AIDS in the Philippines, and health officials fear that public apathy about the epidemic has risen with her passing.

"Sarah Jane's coming out publicly really helped the national AIDS awareness program," said Nenet Ortega, a program director at the Remedios AIDS Foundation.

But with Sarah's passing, fewer people want to come out publicly to support the program, she said.

Budgetary constraints and the Catholic Church's antipathy towards condom use and contraceptive availability have not helped the AIDS awareness message either, health officials said.

"The Catholic Church is very strong in this country and they incite the government to be emotional rather than rational about the laws they promulgate regarding AIDS and even contraception," said Dr. Margarita Holmes, a clinical psychologist and trainer of AIDS counselors.

While the Philippines has so far escaped the ravages of the disease seen in Thailand and some other neighboring countries, AIDS experts see no reason for complacency.

"Considering the low use of condoms in this country, we run great risks for an epidemic that will eventually be high and rapid," noted medical anthropologist Dr. Michael Tan in a paper delivered to the National AIDS convention last year.

Reported cases totaled 1,561 in the Philippines as of September this year, while the WHO estimates the number of infections at 10,000.

In contrast, Australia, with a population a quarter the size of the Philippines was estimated by the WHO to have 12,000 cases while Vietnam with a similar-sized population had 122,000.

Some researchers have surmised a lack of shared land borders with other Asian countries may have slowed HIV movement into the Philippines.

They also point to studies showing Filipino male sexual 'risk behavior' to be lower than in many countries.

Relatively low rates of injected drugs are also thought to have been a contributing factor. *PNA and Reuters*

Meat processors hit bill filed by Villars

BY CHRISTINE A. GAYLICAN

DOMESTIC meat processors are opposing a bill filed in Congress seeking to confine importation of live animals, meat and meat products only to Australia and New Zealand.

Senate Bill No. 1004, and a corresponding House version, aim to limit meat importation only from countries declared by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) as free from the foot-and-mouth disease and where vaccination of animals is not practiced.

The purpose of the bills, filed by Sen. Manuel Villar and Rep. Cynthia Villar respectively, is to eliminate the risks of contamination from FMD and other livestock-related diseases.

Aside from New Zealand and Australia, the country currently imports meat and meat products from India, parts of Europe and parts of Latin America.

The Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc. (Pampi) warned, however, that this policy would drive up the prices of canned or frozen meat products in the domestic market. Pampi, composed of 38 member-companies engaged in meat processing, is led by Jollibee Foods Corp., San Miguel Foods Corp., McGeorge Foods Corp. (local franchisee of McDonald's hamburgers), Pacific Meat Co. (producers of Argentina food products) and RFM Foods Corp.

"The proposed law does not recognize risk assessments, as practiced all over the world. Proposing such an approach not only as a policy but as a law should be considered carefully," said Pampi executive director Francisco Buencamino.

The National Meat Inspection Commission (NMIC) and the Bureau of Animal Industry have filed separate position papers on the bills.

NMIC Director Efren Nuestro said the commission has recommended a status quo on current control methods and systems over imported meats as they have proven to have been effective.

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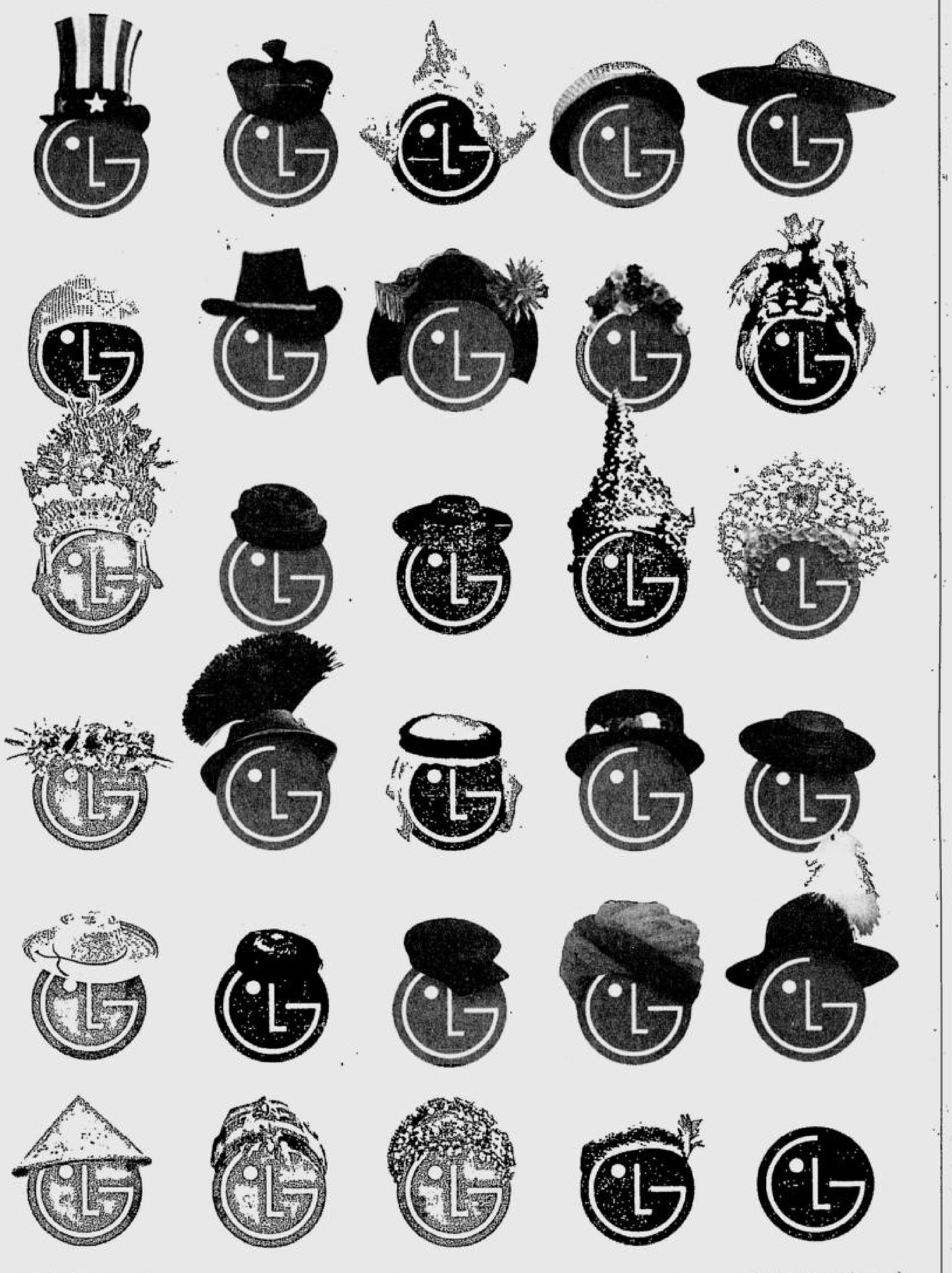

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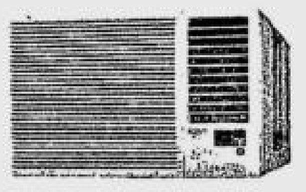

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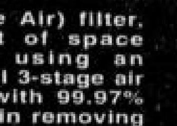

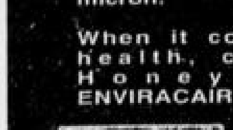

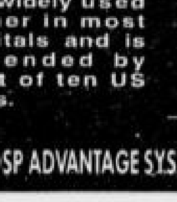

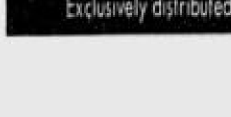

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Muddled

EDITORIAL

THE MORE people talk about the telecommunications franchise that never was, the more the issue becomes confusing. It has been four months since charges were first aired that some Palace officials, and then First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, had accepted bribes to facilitate the recall of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's veto of the bill mandating the establishment of a clearinghouse interconnecting all the country's telecommunications carriers. But while so many faces have been smeared with mud, a clear picture of what really happened has yet to emerge.

In the latest episode of this dirty war, President Macapagal stands accused of personally trying to grab the controlling interest in both the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. and APC Wireless Interface Network. The allegation was made in a sworn statement by Pacifico Marcelo, the principal stockholder in the two companies which had gotten a congressional franchise to set up the telecommunications clearinghouse. In the statement, Marcelo seemed to go out of his way to clear the President's husband of bribery charge, but said he had the goods on the President and they were more than enough to bring her administration down.

Marcelo's problem is that he has no witnesses to support his allegation. But neither has the President. And while the burden of proof is on her accuser, Ms Macapagal hasn't gotten out of this fray unscathed—or not yet anyway. The reason is that everything that has been said and done regarding this controversy doesn't add up neatly. And this is true on both sides of the equation.

Marcelo says Ms Macapagal demanded majority of the stocks in his two corporations in exchange for her help. But what kind of help she offered, Marcelo doesn't say. It couldn't have been a recall of the veto. The President knew and he knew that a president cannot recall a veto—at least not after it had been communicated to Congress. Was Ms Macapagal then suggesting a new franchise? If she did, that would not only make her stupid but reckless as well, considering the controversy already stirred up by earlier allegations of bribery.

For a smart businessman, Marcelo appears to have his computations all screwed up. He says his clearinghouse would handle 20 percent of the telecommunications traffic and its projected earnings would reach $1.2 billion. The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s sales for the first half of the year was P36.72 billion. Smart and Globe reported revenues of P10.5 billion and P15.45 billion, respectively, during the same period. If the trend continues, these major carriers will generate all together revenues of about P125 billion during the year. How can a mere clearinghouse possibly earn half of their combined sales?

Three of Marcelo's partners in the business venture have come out with sworn statements belying his allegations of an attempted shakedown by the President. If they can't stand by him, who will, except perhaps some politicians bent on bringing the administration down by whatever means, fair or foul?

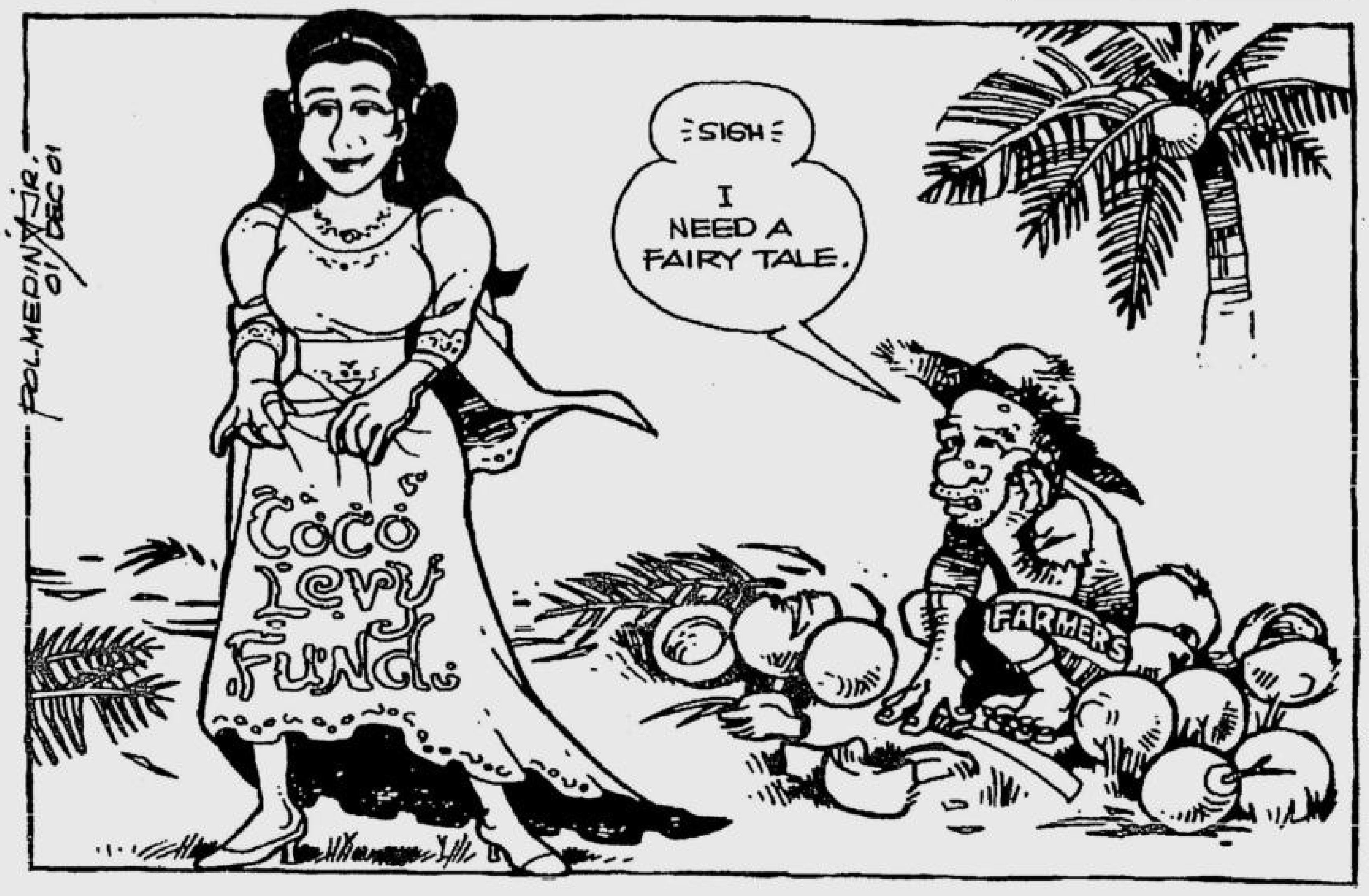
If the administration just let Marcelo prattle on, he would have been caught in his own web of contradictions and then quickly forgotten. But top administration officials, including the President, apparently couldn't leave him alone.

The controversy involving her husband had not even died down yet, and Ms Macapagal had to meet with a man who was rumored to have offered him a bribe. Not only that, their conversation had to be done one on one, without anyone listening in. To anyone who knew about it, the meeting could only mean either that Ms Macapagal was making a pitch for Marcelo to clear her husband or, worse, she was trying to cut a deal, as Marcelo is now saying.

Adding fuel to some naughty suspicions are the very public attempts of some of the President's subalterns to strike back at Marcelo. Last Monday, immigration agents went to the Senate to "invite" Marcelo, who had acquired American citizenship but claims to have renounced it, to answer question about his status. The Department of Justice is reportedly building a case against him for fraud, misrepresentation, etc. Lately there are reports that the government is planning to vote him out of the board of the sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Inc.

The question in some people's mind is: Why is the administration going after him with all guns blazing? And the only answer seems to be that either it wants him silenced or it wants to destroy his credibility completely.

Why? All this only makes Malacañang look like it really has something to hide.



Reader reactions

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

MY sincere apologies for the unanswered letters and ignored invitations that you have sent me at the PDI offices. I have explained several times in this column that I collect my mail there rather erratically, sometimes for months on end. By the time I do, most of the correspondence will have become stale, especially the invitations.

I would like just the same to express my appreciation to those of you who have taken the trouble of assuring me that you concur with many of my views. The sentiment is, of course, not always unanimous. Sometime ago, a reader accused me of being a hypocrite for, curiously, pointing to some common grammar errors that I hoped to correct. I still can't understand the reason for the man's bile.

It was comforting to receive the condolences of some readers on the death of my daughter-in-law for whom I wrote "Farewell to Maybelle" on Oct. 14. I was particularly touched by the request of Mrs. Jenny Bartolome Friend for my address so she could write me directly.

"His column the other day about his daughter-in-law Maybelle was very heart-rending and I just wish to tell him that my sympathy is with his family, especially his son Caloy and his granddaughter Cara," she wrote our Reader's Advocate, Raul J. Palabrica, who faxed her letter to me. "I have thought hard about what he wrote and being a mom with two young kids (ages 6 and 3) I appreciate more each day lived with my husband and kids…I said, and will continue to say, a prayer for Maybelle. She was blessed to have loving parents-in-law."

Dr. Rudy M. Singson, from Cebu, wrote to say that the article about Maybelle made him and his wife, Jewel, shed tears of "joy and grief." "Joy in the knowledge that you loved Maybelle so much; grief in the passing away of a woman full of beauty and life. I can vicariously feel your sadness." He adds, "I have the same birthday as Cara, the living legacy of Maybelle. Every time I say a prayer, Caloy, Maybelle and Cara will always be a part of it."

Mrs. Ma. Sol Resma de la Serna, who describes herself as a grandmother of five, says she enjoys the articles about my family and was much amused by the different ways my children informed me that they wanted to get married. But "most of all," she said, "I was touched and could not help getting misty" over Maybelle's death. "I hope it will somehow lessen the pain of her loss if I may say that Maybelle's courage in facing death is a jewel of an inspiration to us readers."

I have given Caloy all the letters of sympathy sent to me, for Cara to read when she is older. Meanwhile, the little girl has written her own serious letter that begins: "Dear Mommy, I hope you are happy in your grave."

The above observations are not made for self-levitation but intended to show how much I appreciate the thoughtfulness of friends, known and unknown, who shared our sorrow. It was really also a rejoicing because Maybelle's death, as we saw it, was her birth to eternal life and the exaltation of her immortal soul. And as her husband put it, "she gave us joy and beauty and memories of laughter in the rain."

Because Mrs. De la Serna's letter was addressed only to me, I am reproducing the following portion for the information of my fellow columnists in the INQUIRER:

"I filed clippings of Fr. Jerry Orbos and Fr. Ben Villote's work. Having a tremendous respect for classical music, Mr. Conrado de Quiros' 'A glimpse of Heaven' was for me a treasure. Mr. Randy David's serious letter to his first grandchild was quite a piece. Mr. Neal Cruz's 'Better to try and fail than not to try at all' is a consensus here in Cebu. Ms Cunanan, Ms David, Ms Harper and the lady writer informing us of events in Mindanao are 'sources of pride' for women. Mr. Antonio Carpio certainly enlightens us on economic situations. What happened to the 'sharpened sword' of Mr. Tulfo for Ping Lacson? Congratulations to all of you."

On another matter, I would like to report that three days after I complained about the delay in the replacement of my daughter's stolen driver's license, she received a telegram from the Land Transportation Office informing her that she could now call for her new license. There was also a letter from Mr. Luciano L. Caparas, of the LTO Makati branch, who acknowledged that our complaint "stems from a simple case of oversight on the part of our personnel for which I take personal responsibility." Such a forthright attitude, so rare in our bureaucracy, commends this humble public servant.

For the information of the public, Mr. Caparas adds that the processing of drivers' licenses and registration of motor vehicles are now done "within an hour at our Makati DO since February this year when we started our operations under a computerized" system.

Regarding my claim for Medicare benefits, it turns out that the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. wrote me on Oct. 25, 2001, at the PDI office, informing me that my application had been returned to the Medical Center Manila on Aug. 15, 2001 for lack of a supporting document. I was not so notified by the hospital but fortunately Ms Leticia Portugal, head of the PHIC claims department, communicated with me directly at my residence address, thus enabling me to correct the deficiency. I am grateful to her and Dr. Agnes Castro for expediting the release of my reimbursement check.

Finally, Mr. Ramon Bergado, president of the Philippine Association of Detective and Protective Agency Operators, writes to stress that security guards are required to undergo two years training under the supervision of the PNP for the purpose of professionalizing them. He admits that there are "black sheep and bad eggs" that should be booted out to cleanse their ranks. Nevertheless, he assures us that "the leaders of the security industry are not remiss in the recruitment and posting of good, disciplined and efficient guards." Except those arrogant guards I wrote about, who should be investigated.

Did Garchitorena get due process?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

A LOT of knees must be knocking among the sitting judges—roughly 1,450 of them as of June 2001 (not counting those in the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals because their knees are not knocking)—as a result of the thunderbolt that was thrown at Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena.

The Supreme Court, by this act, is sending the unmistakable message that it is serious about pursuing reforms in the judiciary, an action program dubbed as the "Davide Watch." The goal is "speeding up quality justice"—read fair and objective for quality—to borrow from the title of Justice Art Panganiban's monograph on the subject.

To speed up disposition, judges are required to fill out monthly forms enumerating their pending cases, the new cases filed and the cases resolved, with their relevant dates.

The "aging" of cases is compiled, i.e. number of pending cases, the period they have been pending, cases already submitted for decision and the dates they were submitted. If decisions are not rendered within the reglementary period (90 days, I think, for the regional trial courts), the judges get a letter from the court administrator asking for an explanation (delinquent judges cannot draw their salaries, which may encourage some to risk lying about their accomplishments). And if the reason is weak, according to my source in the Supreme Court, lawyer Thelma Bahia, the tardy judges are asked to show cause why they should not be subjected to disciplinary action. The Davide Court is very strict about this.

Which is all great. But there are some disturbing questions:

Was Garchitorena accorded the same treatment as a lagging lower court judge? I think it is called due process, which has been described as the embodiment of the sporting idea of fair play.

Answer: No. From all reports, Garchitorena was caught totally unawares by the Supreme Court action. To be sure, there was an IBP "resolution" (apparently not a formal complaint) which the Supreme Court asked Garchitorena to comment on some 15 months ago. But after that, nary a ripple. A performance audit of the whole Sandiganbayan was conducted, not just Garchitorena. There was no indication that he was being singled out.

Moreover, the verdict was handed down in the most cavalier way: by fax. He was not given the courtesy of being informed even by phone that it was coming. The press knew something before he did: an ABS-CBN reporter called him up the weekend before to say that the word was out that he would be replaced as presiding justice.

Next question: Does the Supreme Court apply the same strict standards to itself, or the Court of Appeals?

Answer: Apparently not. Bahia says that only lower courts are required to fill up the forms. And lawyer Teresa Dimaisip of the Supreme Court's Judicial Records Office confirmed that while she could generate data on the aging of cases and decisions unpenned beyond the reglementary period, (a) it hasn't been done and (b) she needs to secure a clearance from Clerk of Court Puno to accommodate my request. Dimaisip, alas, never called back. I requested a feedback, even if the answer was a no.

Finally: Can we get an idea whether the Sandiganbayan in general and Garchitorena in particular moves more slowly than other courts?

Answer: Crudely, but we can. The 2001 Philippine Statistical Yearbook gives data (supplied by the Supreme Court) on the disposition rate, the ratio of total cases decided to total cases filed, where a ratio of more than one indicates a decreasing backlog. The data show that the Supreme Court under Davide achieved impressive improvements in its disposition rate (1.22 and 1.10 for 1999 and 2000, respectively, indicating a decreasing backlog). But the Sandiganbayan's disposition rate in 2000 was a robust 1.47, significantly higher than the Supreme Court's. In fact, the Sandiganbayan's average disposition rate for the last eight years (1993 to 2000) was higher (1.02) than that of the Supreme Court (0.88), the Court of Appeals (0.94), or the RTCs (0.74).

Is Garchitorena slow? In the audit of the Sandiganbayan, Garchitorena's division showed the second highest number of pending cases (724 compared with 736, 637, 590, 712 for the other divisions) and the highest number of cases not decided within the reglementary period (74 compared with 4, 38, 14, 47). But of the 74 cases, Garchitorena is responsible for 9, another colleague is responsible for 32. The rest, until recently, were unassigned. The third colleague, Justice Ong, is up to date on his assignments.

Bottom line: The Sandiganbayan is at worst no slower than other courts, and Garchitorena, while he could be faster, is no slower than some of his colleagues.

When it comes to the quality of justice that Garchitorena dispenses, just ask any good lawyer that has appeared before him. But that's another story.

The last question: Does Garchitorena deserve the punishment and the public humiliation that he got? The answer is obvious.

Finish it in court!

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WHEN I first heard from my friend Dante Ang a few weeks ago about the proposed "compromise settlement" on the coconut levy issue that his group was helping to arrange between Eduardo Cojuangco and the Macapagal administration, I had my misgivings. And the more I thought about it, the more I didn't like it.

Ang was quoted in the papers yesterday as saying that a small group of religious in Davao City, led by Archbishop Eduardo Capalla, had brought the Cojuangco group and the farmers together to discuss the idea of a compromise involving 27 percent of the San Miguel Corp. shares, now valued at P50 billion, out of the total coco levy funds, which is now worth about P150 billion.

The government sequestered the 27 percent of SMC shares when Cory Aquino came into power in 1986, on the grounds that these were bought with coco levy funds extracted in the form of duties and taxes from the small coconut farmers for nearly 10 years, from 1973 to 1982. Up to now ownership of these shares is still being disputed in the courts by the government and Cojuangco. Another 20 percent of SMC shares Cojuangco claims to have bought with his own personal funds were also sequestered and are also still under litigation.

* * *

What's covered by the proposed compromise settlement is the block of 27 percent SMC shares. Ang told me that the main item here is that the Cocofed group of Cojuangco and Zamboanga Mayor Clara Lobregat would get one-fifth of this block while the rest would be administered by a foundation for the benefit of the farmers. Ang argued that the coco levy issue has been in court since 1986 but no resolution was in sight. He said it would be better to compromise and have money that the farmers could use instead of making them wait longer.

This is an application of the pragmatic "bird-in-hand-worth-two-in-the-bush" argument and, doubtless attractive to some groups, including coconut farmers, especially today when many farmers earn less than P25 a day. It also recognizes that Cojuangco remains powerful even though his protégé, Joseph Estrada, is no longer in power. Cojuangco is said to have financed the campaign of some 70 members of the House of Representatives, among them two sons and a nephew.

* * *

But there are people like former Quezon Representative and Philippine Coconut Authority Chair Oscar F. Santos, who argue that a settlement does not speak well of the government and our judicial institutions. This group would like to let the courts resolve the case. Ka Oca, who claims to have lost his hair while looking into this issue over the past 30 years, says a settlement does not speak well of the Supreme Court, where the question of whether the proceeds from the levy are private or public funds remains undecided for a decade now. Back in the early '90s, the Court declared that the levy funds were vested with "public interest." This decision is on appeal by Cojuangco's lawyers and up to now the Court has not categorically stated who the rightful owners are. What is taking the Court so long to decide? Many citizens are hoping the new administration team of toughies like Yorac will pursue this issue to the finish in court.

Ka Oca opines that settling disquieting national issues outside of court sets a bad precedent. "*Delikado ito*," he says, adding that a compromise raises questions about the integrity of the government and our justice system.

* * *

Ka Oca puts it very simply: One group comes and takes P15 out of every P100 the coconut farmers got in payment for their produce. Now after 30 years, this group comes back and says, "We're giving you back 27 centavos for every P100 you paid, for your own benefit and to help the industry. If you don't want it, *pasensiya ka*."

Ka Oca wonders why those people who managed that levy for years are still setting down the terms and conditions of agreement. *Iyon bang mga makakapal ang kamay at matitigas na ang leeg dahil sa kakasungkit ng niyog ang talagang makikinabang sa perang ito?* he asks.

Ka Oca also points out that a compromise settlement runs counter to the official stand of the Macapagal administration enunciated during a meeting at the Palace last Nov. 7 between farmers' groups and Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac, Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza and Presidential Legal Adviser Avelino Cruz. That team clarified that at the present stage of litigation of the levy cases, "a no-compromise policy with any adversarial party must be observed, and that the government shall proceed on the strength and merit of its claim to be resolved accordingly by the courts." In other words, the administration would pursue the coco levy cases to the finish.

Ka Oca pointed out that one week later, Yorac and Carranza met with farmers' groups and delivered the same message. This was followed by a memo dated Nov. 16 from PCA Administrator Danilo Coronacion to "all PCA central, provincial and field personnel," reiterating this commitment. Coronacion stressed that if any compromise agreement were to be struck at all, "it must be premised on a declaration that the coconut levies are public funds for the benefit of the coconut farmers."

* * *

President Macapagal and Speaker Joe de Venecia, who ran as a team in the 1998 presidential elections, appear to be a mutual admiration society. At the meeting between US President George W. Bush and Ms Macapagal in Washington, D.C. the other week, De Venecia, in his typical effusive manner, told Bush that if he had a staunch Western ally in British Prime Minister Tony Blair, he had one in President Macapagal in Asia. Bush retorted, "Yes, President Macapagal is a strong leader and we will support her in every way."

Ms Macapagal returned the compliment by telling Bush that it was De Venecia who came up with the idea of forming a regional coalition between Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines against international terrorism. She also told Bush that De Venecia was batting for a global dialogue between Christians and Muslims as a way to avert a further escalation of what's billed as "the clash of civilizations." Ms Macapagal repeated this compliment to ranking Bush officials, such as Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Remembering the women

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

EVERYONE—man or woman, young or old, married or single, straight or gay—is invited to join the ceremonies tomorrow for the laying of a cornerstone for a memorial "In honor of Maria Teresa Carlson-Fariñas and All Martyr Women Who are Victims-Survivors of Violence in the Family."

The affair will kick off at 4 p.m. at the Quezon City Memorial Circle. Assembly point will be Liwasang Aurora, while the program will be held at Tent 1 near the Visayas Avenue entrance.

Women are enjoined to come in a black or red dress, with a veil, to symbolize our collective mourning for all the women and girls who have suffered abuse at the hands of family members. For them, the home, far from being a sanctuary, became the "most dangerous place of all." If a woman cannot be safe at home, within the bosom of family and in the company of someone who has vowed to love and protect her, then she cannot be safe anywhere else. And if our families are breeding grounds for violence and abuse, is it any wonder that our society as a whole has become violent and inhuman?

If you know of any woman who has been subjected to abuse in the family, if you yourself have been or are the victim of incestuous rape, physical battering or emotional abuse, I would especially urge you to come to tomorrow's gathering to stand as witness to the scale of this crime and social evil. As I am writing this before departing for Baguio, I do not know for sure if all the plans will push through. But one of them was for all the participants to carry cardboard cut-outs of the "woman" symbol, to be planted on the ground in lieu of a memorial, representing all the real, flesh-and-blood women victims of domestic violence. Let your cardboard cut-out be a symbol not just of the woman victim-survivor you know or are, but of your resolve to do the best you can to rid our society of this crime that violates the sanctity of our most basic and sacred spaces.

* * *

TODAY is World AIDS Day, a day during which the world remembers the millions of people who have died and will die from AIDS, as well as recognizes the struggle of people living with HIV and AIDS to live full, active and meaningful lives.

The AIDS Society of the Philippines, with support from the Ford Foundation, is spearheading this year's observance. It will be holding a ceremony today at 1 p.m. at the Padre Faura Atrium of Robinson's Place Manila.

Though it might seem odd that a busy mall should be the site of a ceremony dealing with the reality of AIDS, this may well be a sign of how far we have gone in terms of public education and understanding of the issues surrounding the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Could it be that people living with HIV are no longer the pariahs they were considered in the early 1980s when we first became aware of the disease?

In fact, the slogan for the second year of a two-year campaign with the theme "Men Make a Difference," is "I Care…Do You?" The slogan, says the ASP, is aimed at "creating a sustained focus on the role of men in the AIDS epidemic." More specifically, it "aims to involve men, particularly young men, more fully in the effort against AIDS."

* * *

THIS being World AIDS Day, let me share with you some news that brings some hope for people living with HIV and their families and friends.

The first is from Japan, where an HIV-negative infant was born to a couple who had used treated sperm from the husband who was HIV-positive. Agence France Presse reports that the husband's sperm was cleared of HIV before it was used to fertilize an egg from his wife in vitro. The woman gave birth in late October to an infant who tested negative for HIV. Dr. Hideji Hanabusa, the doctor who performed the procedure with doctors from Niigata University Faculty of Medicine, said that this was the "first case ever in the world" where HIV was completely removed from the sperm that was used for in vitro fertilization. He said a "special solution" was used to separate the virus from the sperm. Similar cases have previously been reported in Italy and Spain. Dr. Hanabusa said that the technology may allow more HIV-positive men to conceive safely.

* * *

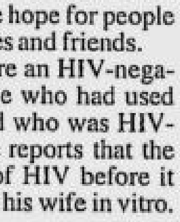
IN CANADA, researchers report that a "naturally occurring" protein might be able to reduce to undetectable levels HIV that is hiding in dormant immune cells.

Canadian researchers reported in the Nov. 15 issue of Virology that although HIV kills T-cells, some of the infected cells do not die immediately and instead remain dormant, creating a reservoir in which HIV can hide. Current antiretroviral drugs slow the virus' reproduction and spread throughout the body, but the treatments are unable to reach HIV hiding in dormant T-cells. To find a way to kill off "hidden" HIV, Dr. Andrew Badley, a clinician investigator at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, and colleagues examined the effects of a molecule manufactured by the Seattle-based Immunex Corp., known as tumor necrosis factor-related apoptosis-inducing ligand (TRAIL) on blood samples from seven HIV-positive Ottawa patients. TRAIL, a protein normally produced by the body's immune cells that kills abnormal cells but has no harmful effects on healthy cells, eliminated HIV in four of the seven blood samples. "It is the first time we have been able to demonstrate that we can eradicate (HIV) from their cells in a test tube. We hope that means we can eradicate it from the body. But we don't know that yet. But it's a significant step," Badley said. Researchers hope to begin testing the therapy on humans within the next one to two years, an Ottawa newspaper reported.

A story of blood and gore

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



UNLESS it has been closed for lack of vocations, the Jesuit Seminary of San Jose is all that remains of the famous college in Intramuros that once vied with the Pontifical University of Sto. Tomas for the title of the oldest college on the islands. Its existence was due largely to an endowment made by one of the early Spanish conquistadors, Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa, who came to the islands with the expedition of Miguel Lopez de Legaspi.

Governor Dasmariñas described Figueroa as "discreet, brave, capable, competent and experienced." At the same time he was also "stiff, unchangeable, independent, fixed in determination and opinion."

Actually he was Portuguese, not Spanish, and he was born in North Africa of noble parents. His brother, Alvaro, was a rich man in Mexico where Esteban must have joined the Legaspi expedition to make his fortune. As captain of the infantry he saw action against Limahong in Marinduque, Borneo, Jolo and Mindanao. For his services, he was granted two *encomiendas*, one in Camarines and the other in Tignauan in Panay. He was also named governor of Mindanao.

In May 1586, Figueroa married the daughter of Licentiate Melchor de Avalos. Three years later, he killed his wife and his nephew after one of the native servants accused the two of adultery. There is no mention in the account whether the accusation was true or not, but Figueroa was tried, fined P5,000 and sentenced to six years of exile in what is now Arevalo in Iloilo.

It didn't take Figueroa long to court Ana de Osseguera whom he married and by whom he had a daughter in 1592 called Margarita. When he went to "pacify" the Moros shortly thereafter, Ana was carrying a second child.

The armada, consisting of 50 vessels of various types, left Oton in 1596 and went off to Buhayen, a Moro stronghold. Troops preceded him, but Figueroa grew impatient and decided to join them to speed up the action. Being stubborn, as previously pointed out, he kept removing his helmet and a Brother Gomez kept putting it back on his head. As they pushed forward, a Moro leaped from concealment and attacked Figueroa who parried the blow and killed his assailant. When he turned to see if his companions were safe, a second Moro leaped out and wounded him fatally on the head. He was carried back to the boat where he died six hours later. Brother Gomez brought the body back to Manila where it was buried in the Jesuit church of which he had been a generous patron.

As a matter of fact, Figueroa had executed a will shortly before he embarked on that fatal expedition naming Fr. Gregorio Lopez of the Jesuit College as his heir in the event that one of his daughters died. It included a cattle ranch known as Suaraga near Arevalo that was being held in trust by Juan Tello de Guzman who had married Margarita de Figueroa, the eldest daughter.

Eight years elapsed and at the beginning of the 17th century some of the settlers became discouraged with the prospects of the colony on account of the Chinese uprisings, disastrous fires, earthquakes and attacking Dutchmen. As a result many decided to return to Spain.

In 1604 two galleons, Nuestra Señora de los Remedios and San Antonio, left for Nueva España. The former encountered a storm and its mainmast had to be cut and it limped back to Cavite. The San Antonio touched on Capul, proceeded to the San Bernardino Strait and was never seen again. Juana de Figueroa, 8 years old, was on it. She had embarked with an uncle, Andres Duarte de Figueroa, who was taking her to Spain where she had patrimonial property in Xerez.

It was conjectured that the San Antonio had encountered one or more typhoons and was trying to return before it fell apart and was wrecked on some isolated island or rock north of Luzon in the vicinity of the Babuyanes.

At the end of 1604, reports reached Manila that boxes and chests had been picked up on the eastern shores of Luzon. Diego Lopez de Saavedra was sent to Lumbang to investigate. A chest was found on the beach in Cagayan and when the contents were brought to Manila, some persons recognized pieces of ivory that belonged to Diego de Segovia who had sailed on the San Antonio. At Cape Engaño many pieces of taffeta and satin were washed ashore and clothes chests were found that belonged to Capt. Benito Mendiola and his wife, Capt. Gomez de Marquez and his wife, and Marshal Gabriel de Ribera, all of whom were registered as passengers on the ill-fated galleon.

News was received that bales, hats, daggers, swords and other personal effects had been washed ashore in Casiguran. As far south as Cape Espiritu Santo on the northeast corner of Samar, a box was found and taken to Leyte where it was identified as coming from the San Antonio.

Since it was the season of monsoons, it was believed that the ship must have foundered somewhere north near the Babuyanes. The San Antonio went down with everyone on board.

Several lawsuits followed the news that the child Juana had died, and eventually the Jesuit claim was upheld.

The San Antonio was believed to have been carrying huge quantities of money and valuables on board. Since there haven't been any underwater explorations since the San Diego some years ago, wouldn't it be interesting to find the remnants of that long lost galleon and whatever treasures might still be in its underwater grave?

(Data from W.C. Repetti, S.J., "The College of San Jose," 1938.)

Going into business

YOUNGBLOOD

Maria Victoria Abenes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

KIDS, don't try this without parental supervision.

When I was in my senior year in college, I had this grand idea of establishing my own business. I shared it with two of my closest friends. The three of us were so excited about the prospect that we planned everything from what kind of a business to set up to the name we would give the establishment.

We decided to go into the food business. We figured that we wouldn't do badly in that area since people eat more often than, say, have their hair cut or change their wardrobe.

The problem was we didn't have enough capital. There was no way the three of us could raise enough money to get started, so we decided to take in partners. We tracked down a couple of guys we knew to have good reputations. They bought the idea even before I could finish explaining it to them.

It was only much later that I found out they had asked their whole gang to join the partnership. But if ever we had uneasy feelings about having 10 members, we quashed it immediately because we were itching to enter the world of commerce. We rationalized that a big group would actually be good for the business because it would eliminate the need to hire many employees. We thought we could run the business by ourselves if we arranged our schedules.

It was not easy to convince our parents to "lend" us the money we needed to get started. They were quick to point out the many loopholes in our scheme. They warned us that the business would interfere with our studies. We assured them that we would give it up at the first sign of trouble in school. They also thought that a big group would prove unwieldy. And, oh, did we know that friends made terrible business partners? Duh, I didn't hang out with my other seven partners. They were not in the "friends" category, at least, not yet.

Needless to say, after more cajoling and whining, our parents gave us the money and told us to get lost. You know how parents are: they'd give you a thousand warnings when you're about to leap from a cliff but still they tell you to go ahead so that you can grow wings on the way down. When kids start reaching for their dreams, parents tell them to go for them.

We found a small school that had no canteen to speak of. We leased the place before anybody else could get any idea about its great potentials.

We thought we had it made. We had a good location and a captive market. There was no way our business could lose.

The preparations for the opening went quickly underway. It was tiring, but it was with pride that we put up a sign that said, "BST canteen is now open to serve you."

The first couple of weeks went well. All the partners got along well with each other. We were careful not to step on each other's toes. Although money did not come pouring in, we managed to earn a decent sum at the end of each day. We were even making friends with the students who frequented our canteen.

Things took a different turn before the first month was over. That's how long the honeymoon lasted. Someone started playing nasty pranks on the rest of us. The inevitable Big Boss wanted to have the last say on how we should run our business, although we had an agreement that everyone would be treated as an equal. We grumbled when we had to purchase supplies. We argued over who would work on which shift. We were in the canteen more often than we were in the library, and before long, school work was piling up.

There were times when we were tired and irritable. On such occasions, we easily took offense at what someone said or did. We broke up into groups and engaged in silent wars. We did not talk about what went wrong at the canteen because—there it is—we were friends, and we did not have the heart to tell so and so that his or her idea was not working and that it was hurting our business. I knew it was bad management, but I could not bring myself to talk to my friends as business partners. I did not want to come across as a money-grabbing person who was putting profit above the feelings of my friends.

A business partnership is a lot like marriage. There's a period of showing your best, a period of showing your worst, and then you settle somewhere in between.

But just when everything seemed to have settled down, my thesis started to demand most of my time. I found it hard to work at the canteen, attend my classes and work overnight on my thesis. I was tired and I did poorly in all my responsibilities.

I had to shorten the hours I was spending in the canteen. My partners graciously took over and told me to go ahead and concentrate on my studies. They told me to drop by only whenever I could manage it.

That was the time I learned to look at my partners in a different light. At that moment, they ceased to be mere business associates and became a part of my life, regardless of the fact that one day we'd make a decision that would lead us to our different destinies.

I was spending all my time doing school work. I had virtually no social life. The semester was drawing to a close and I knew the next would even be a busier one for me. I had no time left for our small business.

I assessed the situation and considered all my options. Then I called one of the guys and told him I would have to quit the partnership. I told him I was hoping they would go on without me.

When everyone heard I was giving up, they quickly followed suit. I felt guilty about that. If I did not quit maybe we would have stayed long enough to recover our losses. My leaving triggered the collapse of our business just when it was starting to stand on firm ground. It took a long time before my conscience allowed me to rest.

Funny, but when I look back now, things don't look as bad as they seemed to be when they were happening. We had more good times than bad. Our troubles weren't as serious as we thought them to be. I've added seven more people to my circle of friends. I got to see facets of my friends which until then had been hidden from me. It made me realize that they were complex and interesting persons and it made me appreciate them more.

The lessons I learned outweigh whatever difficulties I encountered. I learned not to cut corners if I can help it. Get the best that you can afford because if you don't, you pay in other ways.

I also learned that the really good things in life, those you get to keep for life, are not paid for with money but with a piece of your heart.

I found out that God gives us beginner's luck, and sometimes that's all that we can expect. The rest of the work is up to us if we want to go somewhere or to be somebody. And beware of things that look too good to be true because they often are.

Our parents were right all along. We set up a business at the wrong time with the wrong persons. I'm just grateful that they understood it was something we needed to do. We needed to learn our lessons in our own fashion and at our own pace. I thank my parents that they let us venture into the world to get knocked down and bruised instead of shutting us in safe glass cages. They understood that some lessons are learned the hard way.

I thank them for having enough confidence in us to let us try out our ideas and allowing us to decide what best suits us.

I'm grateful for all those wonderful times I had with my friends.

I'm glad I went out into the adult world and tested my wings even if obviously it was not the right time. At least the experience left me with a clear idea of what to expect from the world. What I lost in terms of time, money and effort, I gained in experience, and it has made me more confident, stronger, and, yes, more grown-up.

Maria Victoria Abenes, 22, has a BS Commerce degree from the Saint Louis University in Baguio. •

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Soldiers have rights, too

THIS is the reaction of an ordinary citizen to your editorial last Nov. 5, titled "Unusual wounds."

Both the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the New People's Army claim to have suffered casualties as a result of the tragic event in Sitio Tuli, Barangay Conversion, Pantabangan, Nueva Ecija, on Oct. 8, 2001. But the United Methodists and other sectors said it was a massacre while the AFP says it was a legitimate encounter.

I agree with the INQUIRER's position on the matter and I would urge that, to get to the truth, an independent investigation be conducted, a move which the AFP welcomes.

My deepest sympathy goes to the families of those who were killed on that fateful day. Indeed it is very painful to have a friend, a spouse or a family member killed.

It is sad to note, however, that when incidents like this occur our soldiers are invariably accused of human rights violations. But when the soldiers are the ones killed, charges of human rights violation are never made. Is this justice? For whom? Are human rights only for the civilians? What about our soldiers?

How do you think the families of the slain Capt. Rogelio Eligino and all other soldiers who fought and died for our country feel? I grieve with these people who cry for justice, I grieve with the 54th Infantry Battalion, 5th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army and the whole AFP for the injustice that they too suffer.

I agree with Capt. Eugenio Julio in his letter to the editor published last Nov. 10, 2001 when he said that "the AFP (has) not wavered in its mission as our people's defender, protector and agent of peace." I still believe that the soldiers are for peace and that they are not human rights violators. Otherwise, there would be chaos now.—**ROBERT S. DE GUZMAN, Nueva Ecija**

Meralco petition violates power reform law

THIS is a reaction to the article of Ronnel W. Domingo last Nov. 20, which quoted an anonymous source "familiar with the issue" as saying that the new Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) is likely to approve Meralco's petition for a 30-centavor per kwh rate increase.

This latest mind-conditioning but obviously baseless report is a clear indication that Meralco's reasons for seeking a rate increase are weak. Faced with strong consumer opposition at the ERC, Meralco hopes to win in the media instead. But this may not be that easy under a reformed power industry.

Despite its numerous weaknesses, there is something to be grateful for in the passage of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or Republic Act 9136 as this mandates all utilities, like Meralco, to submit their respective revised/unbundled rates with the ERC within six months from the approval of the act, which means that Meralco has until early December to comply. One significant effect of this provision is that it will separately show the distribution wheeling charge (cost of use of the wires/cables) from the metering and collection services so that the distribution utility rates will reflect the cost of providing each service.

This provision makes Meralco's petition "out of time and out of form." This is because the petition which was filed prior to the passage of RA 9136 covers an increase for the combined function of distribution and retail supply rate which is inconsistent with the provision on unbundling.

Therefore, because of RA 9136, Meralco's petition for rate increase should be preceded by the submission and approval of its revised or unbundled rate in order to establish the rate base for its desired increase. Besides, the pending government appeal to the Supreme Court on the 1998 P10.8 billion refund (now estimated to be P20 billion) definitely has a direct bearing on Meralco's rate hike petition.

This provision on rate unbundling will allow the ERC and consumer groups to determine whether a utility's petition for rate increase is reasonable and affordable.

Until then, Meralco should avoid resorting to its usual practice of conditioning the minds of consumers through the media as this only fans the flame of consumer fury that may spread like a forest fire.

Prior to the passage of RA 9136, utilities financed their capital expenditures through bank loans and simply passed on the cost to its captive customers by increasing their rates. But because of RA 9136, industry rules have changed. Utilities should now infuse their own capital for their capital expenditure program or if they opt to avail of a bank loan, the amortization should not come from a rate increase but from efficient management and operations. That should be the way to do business in a reformed electricity industry, we think.—**PETE ILAGAN, president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc., Unit 616 Roxas Seafront Garden Townhomes, Roxas Boulevard corner Ortigas Street, Pasay City**

Abusive officials of homeowners' associations

I WAS happy to read columnist Ramon Tulfo targeting abusive officers of homeowners' association in exclusive subdivisions. I live in such a subdivision and have often been aghast at the abusive ways of association officers.

In many cases, association officers are overstaying in their positions. Usually retirees who no longer hold jobs, these homeowners association officers won't relinquish their posts. They find ways to postpone elections so they can hang on to their posts. That is how greedy they are for power.

It's a good thing that there's someone like Tulfo who takes up the cudgels for ordinary homeowners who are being harassed by power hungry association officers. Hopefully, his concern will teach abusive officers to be fair in their dealings with members.—**DOROTHY OCAMPO, Valle Verde II, Pasig City**

LETTERS

Making tax payments public

NEWS reports say that the House committee on ways and means recently approved House Bill No. 283 which will allow the government to make public the tax payments of corporate and individual taxpayers.

Rep. Herminio Teves noted that "many affluent individuals do not pay the correct taxes, and yet the government appears to be more concerned about protecting them."

Initiatives toward improving the transparency of transactions between taxpayers and government seem to be usually blocked by concerns over security. I believe the issue is not that people will be more vulnerable to kidnapping and extortion if we make the records of their tax payments available to the public. I think kidnappers have creative ways of identifying potential victims given the high incidence of the crime. I believe they do it because they know that the chances of getting caught is low compared to the chances of getting away with it.

The issue is that some people want to hide from the public and the government the mismatch between their income and their assets. Don't you think it is obvious why certain "affluent" people do not want their tax records made available to the public? If we have public officials, or even private citizens who are living in a fashion that their incomes do not justify, then they certainly will not want anyone else to know—not kidnap gangs or the Bureau of Internal Revenue or anyone else.

Imagine how senators or congressmen will react during the plenary session when House Bill 283 is presented.

The words of John F. Kennedy comes to mind. If we cannot take care of the many who are poor, the time will come when we cannot protect the few who are rich.—**F. KENNEDY CORONEL, volunteer, Walang Ku-Corrupt, mail@wkc.cjb.net**

MNC investment in tree plantations welcomed

YOUR Nov. 28 article, titled "Lumads slam Alvarez appointment," by Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, merely reported the allegations of a minority tribe in San Luis, Agusan del Sur, which questioned the sincerity of Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez in helping the indigenous people communities in this region.

On behalf of the tribal chieftains of the major tribal association in the Caraga Region, we refute the malicious allegations that Banwaon datus "expressed their total opposition to the appointment of Alvarez as environment secretary" before the Commission on Appointments.

The decision of five multinational companies to invest in tree plantations in Caraga is a big boost to the livelihood of the indigenous communities in the region and is supported by the different local government units and the Regional Development Council.

Officials of the Multi-Sectoral Forest Protection Committee approved the issuance of the Industrial Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) to the five multinational companies.

We have been waiting for this project since we heard about the plan several years ago. In fact, the lumads are excited to see the start of the operation of these foreign firms.

The Banwaon tribes, who have settled in San Luis, are few. They earn a living mainly by cutting trees. The major tribal associations have always considered these groups as breakaway groups because they prefer to defy ancestral laws.

In their petition before the commission, the Banwaons alleged that Alvarez "does not have genuine concern for their rights to ancestral lands and domains."

Agusan del Sur Gov. Edward Adolf G. Plaza said the joint ventures of New Zealander, Singaporean and Filipino investors to reforest more than 100,000 hectares of open and denuded lands in Agusan del Sur, through the Ifma scheme, will bring additional revenue to the province. Through these projects, we expect our economy to perk up, opening more job opportunities and improving the living conditions of indigenous peoples. These firms are expected to invest a total of $800 million in these projects.

The allegation that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources ignores our ancestral rights and domain is completely absurd. Even before the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Ipra) was promulgated, the DENR had already awarded 16 Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC) to Higaonons, Mamanwas, Kamayos, Manobos and Banwaons covering an area of 81,381.60 hectares and benefiting a total of 18,083 tribal people.

In terms of livelihood projects from reforestation projects of the DENR, the lumads, including Banwaons, have earned P242 million from seedling production, plantation establishments and maintenance of plantations. If the DENR could provide income for their projects, how much more these multinational companies once they start operating?

We firmly believe that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the DENR under Alvarez will remain steadfast in their commitment to help the indigenous people through sustainable forest management programs.—**DATU SUMIDLAK, head, Kahugpungan ng mga Tribong Lumads sa Caraga (Katrilcar)**

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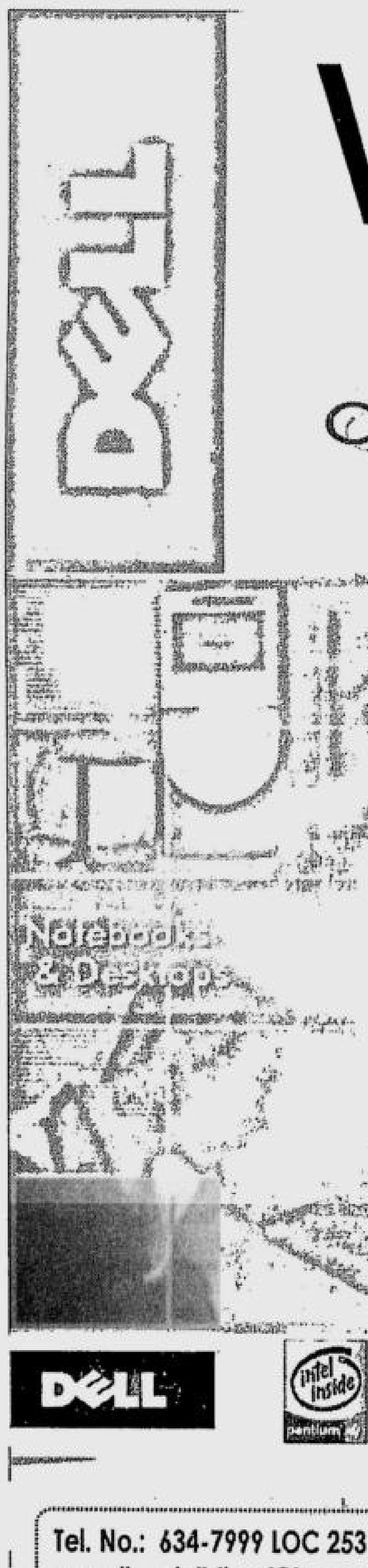

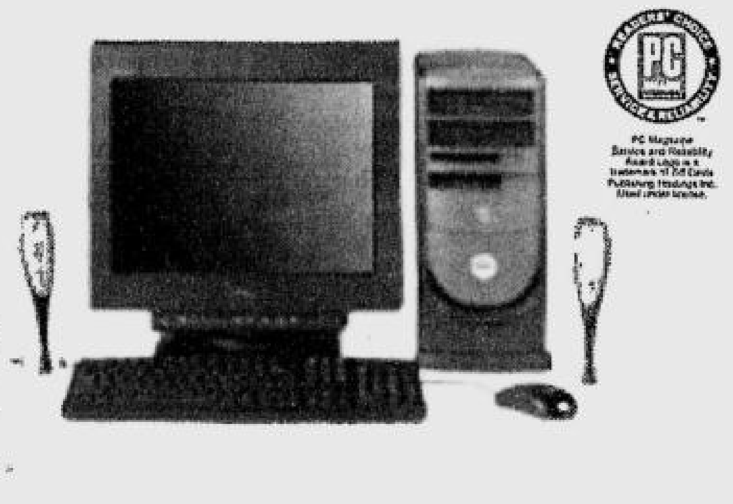

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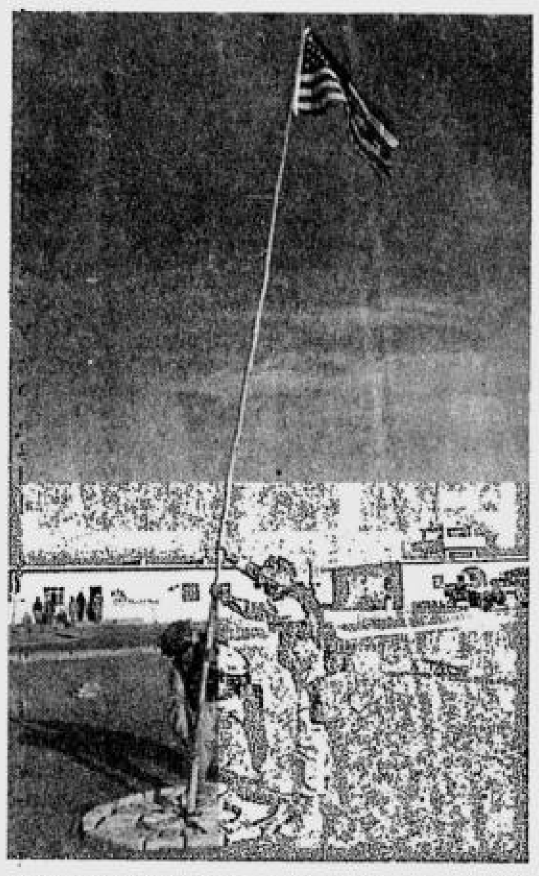
The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Powell: No imminent Iraq attack



UNITED States Marine Michael Sean Leo (left) from Diamondbar, California. and Lance Cpl. Ajmal Achekzai from Salt Lake City, Utah, but born in Kabul, raise the US flag on a US Marines forward base, an airstrip in southern Afghanistan earlier seized by the US forces, early Nov. 29. REUTERS

WASHINGTON—US Secretary of State Colin Powell said Thursday that speculation in the world media that the United States was preparing for an imminent attack on Iraq is unfounded.

"This suggestion out of the media right now that something is on the verge of happening has no particular underpinning substance to it," Powell said in an interview with a small group of reporters at the State Department.

"I think it is highly inappropriate and speculative and hypothetical of me to talk about a war that nobody has declared," he said.

Speculation that a US attack on Iraq is being planned has run rampant among commentators and analysts in the US and foreign media since Monday when President George W. Bush appeared to hint that Washington was planning to expand its anti-terrorism war to oust Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

That speculation has sparked deep concerns in the Arab world and among US allies in Europe where many officials have spoken out against such a move.

Powell, who met earlier Thursday with Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher, said the United States was keenly aware of the concerns being expressed, especially in the Middle East.

"I don't know what people think is about to happen," he said in the interview. "We are in constant touch with our friends in the region.

"I don't want to go so far as to say that we have to get permission from anybody to take action (against Iraq), that's not the case, but we recognize that we have close friends in the region, who have equities in the region and we will be in close consultation with them."

Speaking to reporters after his meeting with Powell, Maher said Egypt was satisfied that the United States understood the concerns about expanding the war on terrorism to Iraq.

"Among friends we had frank discussions about this matter and the secretary said that some friends and allies of the United States are advising caution. I think we have been heard," Maher told reporters.

Powell, standing next to Maher, said the United States and Egypt had a common position on Iraq but acknowledged that some US allies were extremely nervous about the possibility that Washington might target Baghdad next after Afghanistan.

"We understand the cautions that some of our friends have given us with respect to possible future actions and we will stay in close touch and have consultations with our friends," Powell said.

But, he noted that many of the countries expressing concern, including Egypt, shared with the United States the belief that UN Security Council resolutions requiring Iraq to give up its weapons of mass destruction program had to be enforced.

"Both of us (the United States and Egypt) have a common understanding of the nature of that regime and what a danger that regime presents to the region and to the world," Powell said. "We all want to keep Iraq contained."

AFP

Afghan talks show promise, UN brokers say

KOENIGSWINTER, Germany—Afghan factions are moving toward a formula for power-sharing in a two-body interim administration to run the country until a national council can be convened in Kabul, the United Nations said Thursday.

The Northern Alliance, whose fighters hold power on the ground, went further, saying it had agreed with the former Afghan king's delegation on a formula for an interim executive council, one of the two bodies envisioned.

The Northern Alliance said it had agreed with the ex-king's side that the executive council would have 42 members, with 21 members each from the Northern Alliance and delegation of former King Mohammad Zaher Shah,

"This is an important breakthrough because had it not come through these talks would have bogged down, but now they have a focus," said Mohammad Hussin Bakhshi, an aide to Northern Alliance delegate Mohammad Natiqi.

But UN spokesperson Ahmad Fawzi cautioned that a deal had yet to be sealed, partly because two smaller exile groups also at the table in a luxury hotel near Bonn, Germany have other proposals.

"Over the last 24 hours there has been a fine-tuning of the positions but we are still not there," Fawzi said. "There is some very hard work going on. There is a determination to achieve something in Bonn."

Under discussion are an interim administration with executive powers and a larger assembly with a parliamentary-like role. Fawzi said the numbers for the administration ranged from 15-25 members; the larger assembly up to 200.

Delegates were "making headway" in drafting lists of proposed delegates to the two bodies, Fawzi said.

"There is almost agreement on the size of each group," he said. "But we're not there yet."

Both interim bodies are envisaged as giving Afghanistan an initial measure of stability and set the stage for a traditional council of tribal elders to meet in March. UN mediators are pressing for a deal by Saturday.

However, the precise numbers remained in flux.

The sides are also wrangling over a security force, which the United Nations wants to secure peace to re-establish rule of law.

AP

Taliban spy chief defects

WASHINGTON—The Taliban's intelligence chief is believed to be among senior militia officials who have defected to opposition forces in Afghanistan, US officials said Thursday, amid mounting US pressure to destroy the Taliban and al-Qaida leadership.

The defections could be a windfall in the US search for Osama bin Laden, the chief suspect behind the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, who has managed to stay a step ahead of his pursuers as the Taliban have scattered or retreated to their last bastion in Kandahar.

Leaflets dropped over parts of Afghanistan with "wanted" posters offering rewards of between $5 million and $25 million for top al-Qaida and Taliban leaders have yielded a bumper crop of tips and information that are aiding the search, Pentagon officials said.

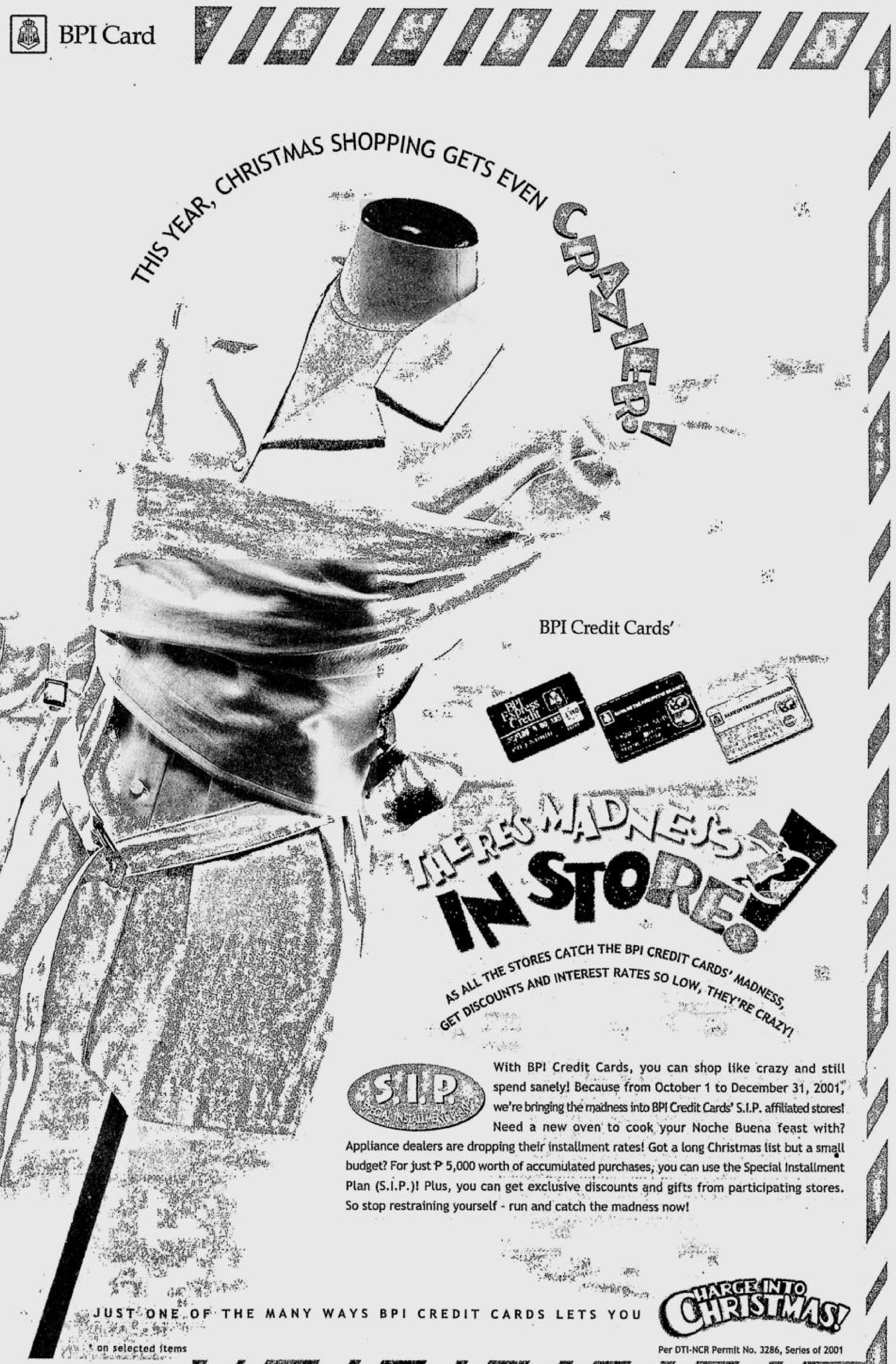
"It is very clear that there have been some defections of some of the more senior people," Victoria Clarke, chief Pentagon spokesperson, said. "I just don't have names that I can share."

"In some cases we have had access to them," she said. "If we have interest in them and think it might be useful for intel (intelligence) purposes, we have had access to some of them."

A top prize was the Taliban intelligence chief—who, according to two US officials speaking on condition of anonymity, was reliably reported to have defected to one of the opposition groups active in the country.

"He's not in US hands, but I've seen reports that he defected to opposition forces," said one of the officials.

AFP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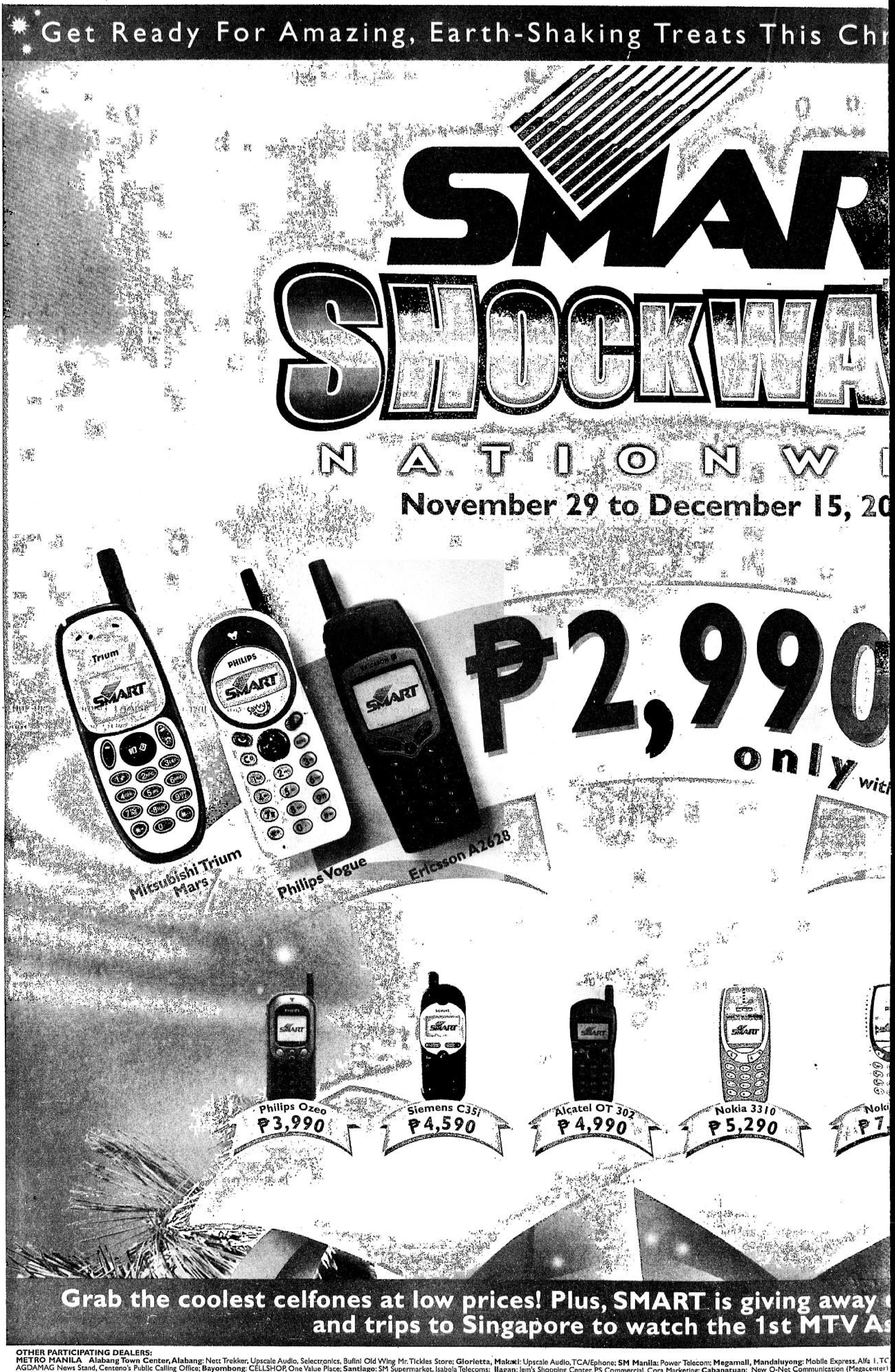

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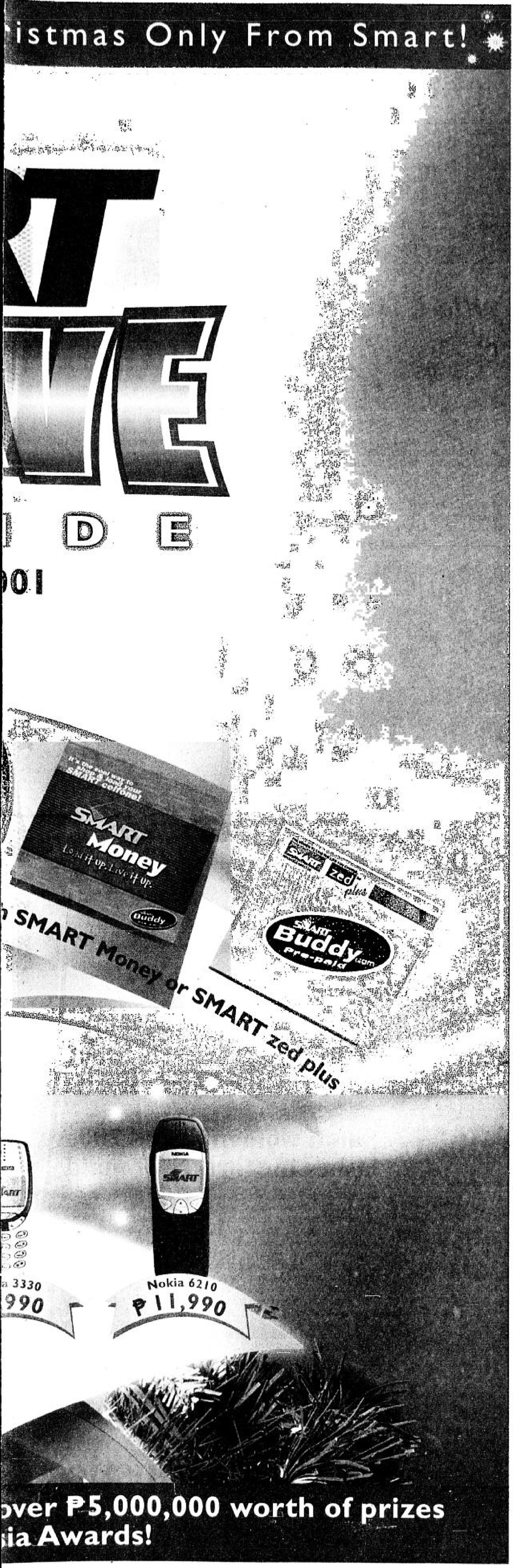
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17 Asian nations adopt plan to fight corruption in region

TOKYO—Seventeen Asian nations adopted a legally non-binding plan Friday to fight corruption, which they said was widespread in the region and hampered economic growth and poverty reduction efforts.

The plan advocates civil service, private business and public awareness action designed to help halt the supply and demand for bribery in publicly-funded projects.

Implementation of the plan is to be reviewed at annual meetings, to which each signatory government in the region is to report on their progress.

The agreement came at the end of a three-day anti-corruption conference, the third annual such meeting held by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

"Corruption imposes a costly burden on businesses, with negative implications on growth and the creation of jobs," Shoji Nishimoto, the director of the ADB's strategy and policy department told reporters at the end of the gathering.

"Governments must act against corruption to promote growth and development," he said.

He added that countries that adopt the anti-corruption plan were likely to get favorable treatment when it comes to allocating ADB assistance.

The countries that endorsed the action plan are Bangladesh, the Cook Islands, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, the Kyrgyz Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, Singapore and Vanuatu.

China, where corruption at all levels of government is a problem, and which earlier this month was accepted into the World Trade Organization after a 15-year struggle, did not attend the meeting, which officials said was due to logistical problems. *AFP*

Corrupt China official built $2.4-M villa

BEIJING—Farmers in the small village outside the city of Shenyang call it "Xia's Palace"—$2.4-million luxury villa built entirely on money embezzled by the manager of a loss-making state transport firm.

Xia Renfan was once listed among China's top young reformers, a model manager who won fame and political power for his work running bus, taxi and tram services in Shenyang, capital of the northeastern province of Liaoning.

But an official newspaper revealed on Friday that Xia had allegedly siphoned funds from the Shenyang Passenger Transport Corp to pay for his villa even as the firm ran up annual losses of up to 120 million yuan.

The China Youth Daily showed pictures of the villa, about 30 km outside Shenyang, set in its own private gardens with a fish pond, and decked out with the latest European furniture, a grand piano and even its own cocktail bar.

Xia is one of the latest officials to stand trial in a sensational corruption case in Shenyang that has already brought down the mayor, his deputy and dozens of top city officials.

Vice Mayor Ma Xiangdong sentenced to death in October after state media reported that he gambled millions of dollars of public money in Macau casinos. Mayor Mu Suixin was given a suspended death sentence for corruption.

Xia, a former soldier, was sent to work in the Shenyang Bus Co. after graduating from Liaoning University and later became manager of Shenyang Tram Co., the China Youth Daily said.

The Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection investigated him for corruption at the tram firm after staff accused him of misusing company money, it said.

But Xia shook off the investigation when he was named one of China's "top 10 young reformers" in 1986 for his aggressive streamlining of the company, it said.

He became a Shenyang district legislator and won a position on the Liaoning People's Political Consultative Conference—a government advisory body.

In 1995, Vice Mayor Ma merged five transport firms under the city government into the Shenyang Passenger Transport Corp., with a workforce of 30,000 people and appointed Xia as general manager, it said.

Xia began building his villa two years later, getting the firm and its subsidiaries to transfer millions of yuan to personal accounts or purchase goods for him directly, it said. *Reuters*

S. Korea apologizes for embezzled funds

SEOUL—South Korea's Finance Minister apologized on Friday after an audit found over $5 billion meant for corporate restructuring had been misused or embezzled, and said the government would track down and punish those involved.

The Board of Audit and Inspection said in a report it had found 182 cases of misuse or embezzlement by the recipients of public money after conducting a six-month investigation of 87 banks and non-banking financial institutions.

The amount involved was $5.64 billion.

"I feel very sorry for causing the nation to worry about the problems in operating public funds," Jin Nyum told reporters.

"We will track down the misused money to the end and will take criminal and civil actions as early as the first quarter of next year," the Finance Minister said.

The state-run audit agency has asked prosecutors to investigate 44 individuals for allegedly embezzling public funds.

The agency found that the government had poured excess funds into ailing companies, as there were mistakes in calculating how much money they needed and whether the recipients were viable or not.

Some companies had inflated their assets to get more aid, while others shut down after receiving support, it said.

"We will do our utmost to recover as much of the misused funds as we can," Jin said. "But it is difficult to say how much of the public money we will be able to retrieve."

The ruling Millennium Democratic Party called the revelations shocking, but the opposition Grand National Party said responsibility lay with the prime minister and relevant officials.

Jin said the ministry will set up an investigative team including representatives from the Korea Deposit Insurance Corp, the agency in charge of public restructuring funds, the Financial Supervisory Commission, and National Tax Office.

He also said the government would not spend any more taxpayers' money to rescue ailing companies. *Reuters*

Suicide bombing deals blow to US' Mideast peace bid

JERUSALEM—A new US peace drive in the Middle East suffered a fresh blow when a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up on an intercity bus in northern Israel, killing three other people.

The attack on Thursday night occurred as US envoy Anthony Zinni met Palestinian security officials to discuss ways to end 14 months of bloodshed in which at least 729 Palestinians and 196 Israelis have been killed.

"My deepest sympathies are extended to the families of those victims of terror who died . . . These vicious terror attacks must stop now if we are to create the environment that leads to peace," Zinni said in statement.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said just before leaving on a trip to the United States that he held Palestinian President Yasser Arafat "directly responsible" for the latest attacks, even though the Palestinian Authority strongly condemned the bombing.

Sharon said he had consulted security officials after the attack and ordered the Army "to act against the terrorists whether they are part of the Palestinian Authority or other terror organizations which are launched by and coordinate with Arafat,s forces."

Sharon is to meet US President George W. Bush in Washington on Monday. Bush has called on Arafat to rein in Palestinian militants.

The Palestinian Authority said it was "working in its full capacity to put an end to all sorts of attacks against Israeli civilians" and had instructed Palestinian security agencies to "chase the perpetrators and bring them to justice."

The Authority also called on Israel "to stop its assaults and to stop assassinations which only increases tension."

An unofficial armed faction of Arafat's Fatah organization said in a statement faxed to Reuters that it was responsible for the attack, but its claim could not be immediately verified.

Palestinian sources said police were searching a refugee camp near the West Bank city of Jenin for suspects.

"Those terrorist attacks of today are the instrument by which the Palestinian Authority undermines the peace mission of General Zinni," Israeli government spokesperson Avi Pazner said.

"This is a clear escalation because over the last few days we have seen a concerted attempt by terrorist organizations . . . to hit inside Israel and to cause as many deaths and injuries as possible," he said.

The blast ripped apart an intercity bus near the northern town of Hadera.

Abdel-Aziz al-Rantissi, a senior official in the Islamic group Hamas which has carried out suicide bombings, killing scores of Israelis since the start of a Palestinian uprising in September 2000, said Israel was to blame for the attack.

"The only reason for the resistance is the (Israeli) occupation and its assassination policy and as long as occupation exists, resistance will continue," he said in Gaza. *Reuters*

RESCUE workers search the wreckage of an Israeli bus after it was hit by an explosion Nov. 29 near the northern Israeli town of Hadera. An explosion tore through a bus in northern Israel on Thursday night, killing at least three people and wounding others in an attack blamed on Palestinian militants, police and medical officials said. REUTERS

Hits written by Harrison

LONDON—George Harrison, dead of cancer at 58, was often overlooked by the Lennon-McCartney partnership, the creative genius behind the Beatles, but wrote some of the Fab Four's top hits before embarking on a successful solo career.

- "I Need You" and "You Like Me Too Much," featured on the 1965 album "Help" marking the start of Harrison's songwriting career in the group.
- "Taxman," from the hugely successful 1966 album ``Revolver."
- "While My Guitar Gently Weeps," acknowledged as the first Harrison classic, featured on the double album The Beatles, better known as the White Album.
- "Here Comes The Sun" and "Something," appeared on the Beatles' last album "Abbey Road" in 1969 and featured Harrison solo. "Something" went on to be covered by Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra and Nina Simone and to become a 20th century classic.
- "My Sweet Lord," recorded in late 1970.
- "All Those Years Ago" appeared on the 1982 album "Somewhere In England," a homage to former fellow Beatle Lennon, gunned down in New York in December 1980.
- "When We Was Fab," from the 1987 recording "Cloud Nine" which marked a return to favor for Harrison after 10 sparse years in the hit parade. The album paid tribute to his time in the Beatles and marked a reconciliation with the group's past. *AFP*

UN Council okays Iraq sanctions plan

UNITED NATIONS—The UN Security Council voted unanimously on Thursday in favor of a US-Russian compromise resolution that pledges to revise sanctions against Iraq within six months and extends the existing UN oil-for-food program for Baghdad until then.

The vote signified an unusual show of unity between the Washington and Moscow, which have been feuding for years on policy over Iraq but have drawn closer since the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

"I am satisfied with the resolution as adopted. It is an important event—that we have consensus on something that is very important," Russian Ambassador Sergei Lavrov said.

Said US Ambassador John Negroponte: "It's an important step forward in terms of the unity of the Security Council vis a vis Iraq and I think it should send a signal to Iraq that we are determined to press forward with this program."

Under the oil-for-food program, Iraq can sell oil and use the proceeds to buy food, medicine and many other supplies, an exception to the sanctions imposed in August 1990 when Baghdad's troops invaded Kuwait. But oil revenues must be deposited in a UN account out of which suppliers are paid.

The program, which would have expired on Friday, must be renewed every six months.

In the resolution adopted on Thursday, Russia agreed to approve by May 30 a new "goods review list" that council members would have to approve separately and a key element of earlier US-British proposals to revise the sanctions.

All civilian goods not on the list do not have to go through such procedures.

In return, the United States agreed to look again at gaps in a December 1999 resolution that outlines vague steps toward suspending the 11-year-old sanctions—providing Iraq allows UN weapons inspectors to resume their work.

The United States and Britain have tried three times since June to revise the program with the aim of streamlining imports of civilian goods to Iraq but tightening restrictions on items that can be used for military purposes.

One purpose is to counteract worldwide criticism that the sanctions have caused civilian suffering—a notion the United States strongly disputes.

Moscow stands to lose lucrative contracts if it opposes Baghdad and previously balked at any change in the program. About 40 percent of Iraq's oil contracts go through Russian middlemen.

Iraq shut off oil supplies for a month in June until it was sure Russia would reject an overhaul of the sanctions, which it believes only make them more permanent.

Baghdad's UN ambassador, Mohammad Aldouri, said he had no instructions yet on his government's reaction to the resolution and expected a decision once it was adopted.

Despite threats from Washington, Iraq has repeatedly refused to allow UN weapons inspectors back into the country, insisting sanctions be suspended first. *Reuters*

Saudi woman draws 200 lashes for torture of maid

RIYADH—An Islamic court sentenced a Saudi woman to one year in jail and 200 lashes for torturing her Indonesian maid who later strangled herself to death using an electric wire, a newspaper reported Friday.

A forensic report showed the maid had injuries on the head, chest, neck, face, back, arms, legs and the abdominal area, indicating she had been systematically beaten, Al-Iqtissadia said.

The maid was found dead at her employer's house in Tabuk, 1,300 km northwest of the Saudi capital, with the wire around her neck and tied to the door.

The forensic report indicated the maid committed suicide, which is forbidden in Islam, but the judge was convinced she was driven to it because of maltreatment by the housewife.

Witnesses told the court they saw serious injuries on the maid's body and that she had told them they were caused by the housewife who sometimes used a hot iron to punish her.

The housewife admitted she had prevented the Indonesian maid from leaving the house, but also told the judge that her husband had not been paying her salary regularly.

The woman will be given the lashes in 10 sessions of 20 lashes a week.

The ruling was upheld by the higher Islamic court in Mecca, home to Islam's holiest site.

More than 19,000 domestic helpers fled their employers in Saudi Arabia in the 12 months to March 2001 over a variety of disputes including ill-treatment, according to Saudi officials. *AFP*

"TOMMY" being escorted by detectives.

Indonesians doubt 'Tommy' will face justice

JAKARTA—Murder and bombing suspect Tommy Suharto, son of Indonesia's former dictator, faced more questioning Friday as police denied he was getting special treatment in detention.

But several commentators remain skeptical that the former millionaire playboy—arrested Wednesday in a blaze of publicity after more than a year on the run—will ever be brought to court.

"The public has every reason to be skeptical," the Jakarta Post said in an editorial.

"This whole saga—from Tommy's escape from the law last year to his arrest on Wednesday—has been nothing but a charade."

Tommy, 39, was relaxed and smiled occasionally as he arrived Wednesday evening at Jakarta police headquarters, on the eve of the national police chief's retirement. Jakarta police chief Sofyan Jacub greeted him with a hug in what the Post called a scene from "Return of the Prodigal Son."

"There is absolutely no special treatment for Tommy and he is treated in the same manner and procedure as other detainees," Jakarta police spokesperson, Chief Commissioner Anton Bahrul Alam, said.

Police have named him as a suspect in the murder of a judge who ordered him jailed for graft and for possession of firearms and explosives. Both counts are punishable by death. They have accused him of being behind a spate of bombings in Jakarta in recent years.

Alam said detectives on Friday afternoon began questioning Tommy again to "cross-check all of his statements with those from the other suspects."

He said Tommy was sharing a regular cell at the city police headquarters with three men who had been locked up for gambling.

Tommy failed to turn himself in on Nov. 3 last year to serve the 18-month jail sentence for corruption. On Oct. 1 this year, in a highly controversial decision, the Supreme Court quashed the corruption conviction.

But police have named him as a suspect in the drive-by murder in July of Syafiuddin Kartasasmita, the judge who convicted him of graft, as well as in bombing cases.

Police have been showered with praise after months of ridicule over their near-farcical manhunt, during which they consulted psychics and dropped "wanted" posters from a helicopter.

But legal expert Iva Kusuma said she feared that the annulment of Tommy's conviction by the Supreme Court, and police difficulties in building a case against him over the murder and the bombing incidents, would allow Tommy to escape a long jail term.

Kusuma, the legal department chief of Indonesian Corruption Watch, said she suspected "the timing of the arrest" a day before the police chief's retirement.

She said Tommy's case could overshadow another investigation into the apparent disappearance of some $3.8 million of emergency food aid fund in 1999. *AFP*

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Probe of ARMM poll fraud pressed

DAVAO CITY—The National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) urged anew the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to investigate the alleged fraud committed during the Nov. 26 regional elections.

In Cotabato City, a group calling itself "the people of ARMM" came out with a stand in support of the poll watchdog.

As of 2:23 p.m. yesterday, Namfrel said administration candidate Parouk Hussin already recorded 269,972 votes while his running mate Mahid Mutilan got 266,639 votes.

Independent gubernatorial candidate Ebrahim Paglas III had 115,371 votes while running mate Benjamin Loong garnered 106,537 votes.

The poll watchdog said it already tallied 3,142 out of 6,511 election returns from the region's five provinces.

Fr. Eliseo Mercado, Namfrel-ARMM chair, said the investigation could prove to be an important measure to establish whether fraud, allegedly discovered in Sulu, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, were isolated or was the general trend.

"We could not say it was the general trend although there was discovery of efforts by whoever they were to cheat. That's why we are asking the Comelec to launch an investigation, *motu propio* or on its own, so we will know whether those attempts were isolated or it happened everywhere as suspected," Mercado said.

Pre-filled ballots were discovered in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur and in Sulu, just as the balloting was about to begin on Nov. 26.

In all the pre-filled ballots, Hussin and Mutilan's names were written.

But Mercado said the Namfrel was not concluding that Hussin and Mutilan cheated.

"We were not being prosecutory when we called for the investigation. It would be important to know how the cheating was done and who might have been behind it, but the most important thing to know is what could be done to stop cheating in the future," he said.

Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco said she also wanted the allegations of fraud investigated.

"What the Comelec should do is to investigate. If I have my way, that should be the case," Tancangco said in a television interview.

Hussin said his conscience was clear and he was sure he did not cheat.

"I don't know about the others, but I ran the campaign honestly and honorably," he said.

Paglas III said he was not complaining because he was losing.

"I am not your typical 'I was cheated' politician, but I am speaking with evidence. The Namfrel saw these (pieces of) evidence themselves," Paglas said in Filipino.

Mercado said the Namfrel was not saying Hussin or Mutilan themselves did the rigging.

In other developments, the provincial board of canvassers in Tawi-Tawi on Thursday proclaimed the winning candidates for the ARMM's Regional Legislative Assembly.

Proclaimed were former Assemblywoman Ruby Sahali (53,194 votes) Anwar Abubakar (39,867) and former RLA Speaker Esmael Abubakar (36,694).

In Maguindanao, Lawyer Lentang Bedol, chair of the provincial board of canvassers, said the six winning candidates would be proclaimed anytime today, as the canvassing of votes was about to be finished. But he said results would only be released after all election returns shall have been canvassed. *Allan A. Nawal and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Leave us alone, villagers ask Army soldiers

SAN LUIS, Agusan del Sur—Residents of Barangay Balit here appealed to government agencies, including Army officials, to order the pullout of soldiers occupying their village's government center.

In a petition letter, the villagers said unless the soldiers vacate their government center, civilian functions would continue to be disrupted.

A platoon of soldiers belonging to the 402nd Brigade and led by 2Lt. Erwin Cariño has been occupying Balit's barangay center for almost a month now despite a request by residents for them to stay there for only two weeks.

Cariño said his troops form part of a 500-man team from the 36th Infantry Battalion and the 20th Infantry Battalion deployed here as Military-Barangay Social Development workers.

He said they were merely helping in the development of the barangays.

Achievements

Cariño enumerated some work his troops achieved, including the construction of waiting sheds and toilets, conducting medical mission and others.

"There is no problem here. The residents are happy with our presence and even wanted us to stay as long as we want," he told the INQUIRER.

Barangay Captain Marcelito Precioso, however, said residents are already fed up with the military's habit of asking the villagers to donate money as counterpart of Army funds.

He also accused them of meddling with barangay affairs, such as the scrutiny of barangay projects and even their Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA).

"They are usurping the functions of barangay officials in implementing projects in the barangay. If we do not cooperate they accuse us of being communists or supporting the NPA," Precioso complained.

"How can we do the job mandated by law when they are there. Our children could not go to the Day Care Center, we could not use our health office and our barangay office because of their presence," Precioso said.

Other functions

Col. Francisco Simbajon, spokesperson of the Army's 402nd Brigade, said they have been scrutinizing where the IRA of the barangay would be spent to ensure that government funds are spent on the people's needs.

Aside from Balit, soldiers are also reportedly occupying other civilian areas.

Cirilo Cubella, chair of Barangay Moritola said the military has occupied portions of his house.

"I am afraid for my family's safety in case of (an encounter) between them and the NPA," Cuballa said.

He added that the soldiers also regularly conduct census of the residents.

Col. Simbahon said that Mayor Jose Chua authorized the military's use of some barangay facilities.

But Sangguniang Bayan Member Charlito Yecyec said they were not aware of such an approval.

Residents also accused the Army soldiers of harassing them.

Datu Loay Loay, a Banwaon tribal leader, also said the military had no respect for tribal beliefs.

"They accused us of being communists for not attending church services and not wanting to help in the painting of the church. But we have other beliefs, which I'm sure they do not or refused to understand," Loay Loay lamented.

Barangay official Cesar Mantindahan of Balit said a soldier repeatedly asked him to surrender because he was allegedly an NPA rebel. He said the soldier even asked him to convince all of the residents of Balit to surrender because they were NPAs. *Ma. Kristina E. Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Tacloban mayor plays Santa Claus

BY CYNTHIA A. BORGUETA
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—It will be a bright Christmas for the city's 1,200 employees after Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez Sr. approved on Wednesday the release of their Economic Upliftment Allowance (EUA) amounting to P12,209,783.55.

City Treasurer Erlinda Reyes said the allowance, which will be released next week, is separate from the Christmas bonus that the employees received on Thursday.

The Christmas bonus is equivalent to the employees' one-month salary.

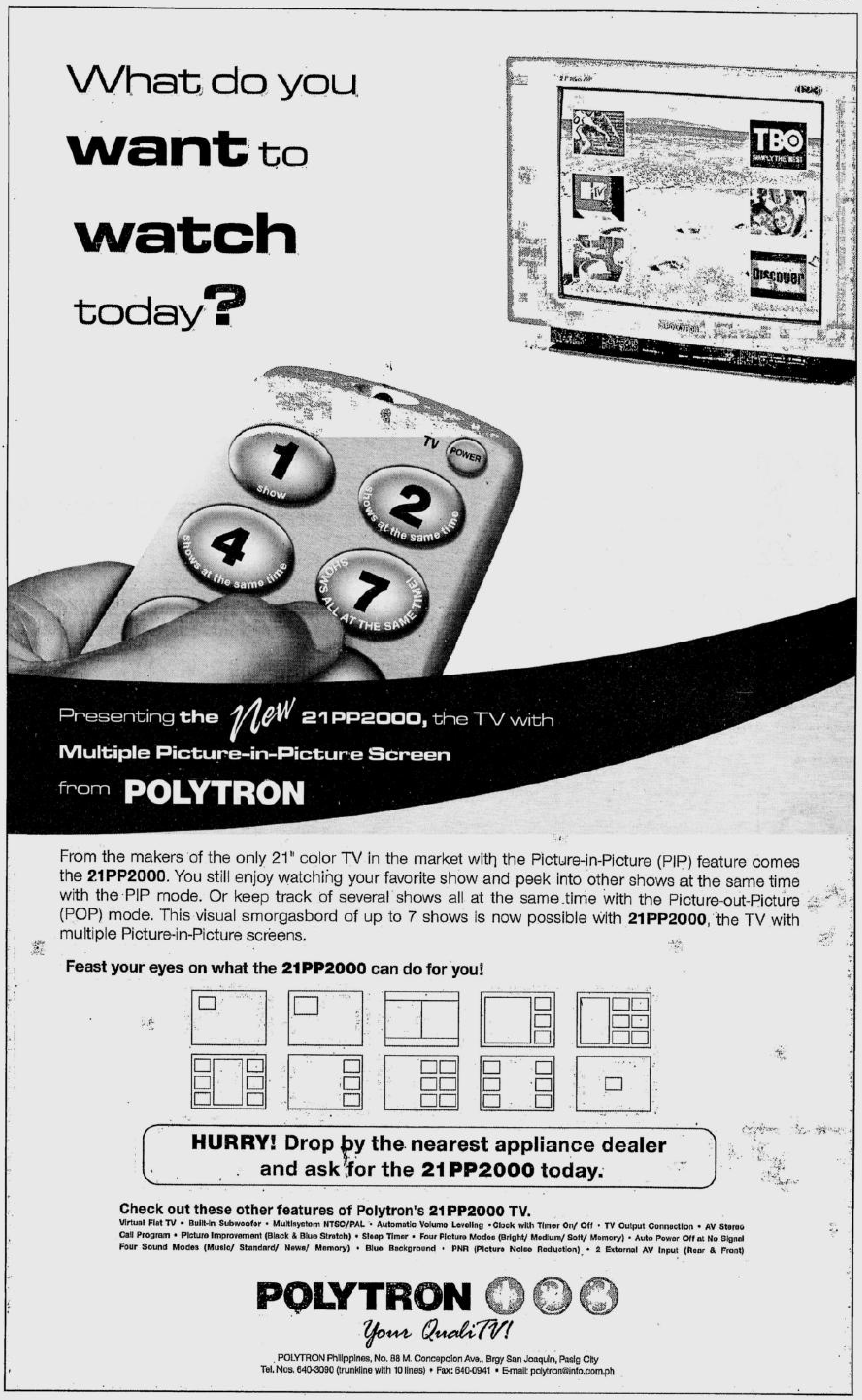
Based on the supplemental appropriation released by the city government's Local Finance Committee, regular employees and appointive and elective officials stand to receive P20,000 each in EUA.

The casual employees will get P10,000 each and job order workers (hired only for a specific project), P8,000 each.

Records at the City Hall's personnel section showed that the city government has 585 regular employees, 103 appointive officers and 12 elective officials.

There are about 250 casual and another 250 job order workers assigned to the different offices of the city government, the same records showed.

According to the implementing guidelines, the allocation for the EUA will be taken from the city's Compensation Adjustment Fund amounting to P2,296,612 and from the P9,913,171.55, which the city saved after several positions remained vacant from January to July this year. The amount had been set aside as salaries of individuals who would have filled these positions.



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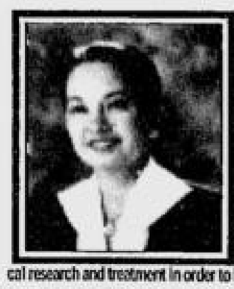
Messages



Malacañan Palace

It is with distinct pleasure that I convey my warmest felicitations to The Philippine College of Surgeons on its 57th Annual Clinical Congress.

I commend the Philippine College of Surgeons for its continuing efforts to improve surgical practice in the country. Your organization's meritorious efforts have helped Philippine medical practitioners keep abreast of current trends in their profession, remain competitive and become better health service providers for our people.

This year's momentous event manifests your organization's unwavering commitment to the advancement of surgical research and treatment in order to have a healthy society. This affair will foster among our country's physician a stronger dedication towards excellence in ensuring healthier and more productive Filipinos.

We stand to prosper as a people and as a country if every Filipino is given easy access to quality healthcare. I enjoin your organization to help in achieving this noble objective so that the task of giving more opportunities to our people can be realized.

I wish the success of this gathering and urge your continued active participation to nation building. Let us work together in steering our nation towards greater peace, progress and prosperity.

More power and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GMArroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

Warm greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine College of Surgeons on holding of its 57th Annual Clinical Congress on December 2-5, 2001.

The past 25 years proved to be fruitful for the health sector as important changes in the profile of our country, particularly the health sector, have greatly improved. The advances in surgical techniques and approaches made possible with the advent of new knowledge and improved levels of technology available in the country, partly accounts for the longer life expectancy that we Filipinos now enjoy.

However, the country is faced with the challenged of addressing the double burden of disease, i.e. as infectious diseases continue to plague most of our countrymen, we see an upsurge of degenerative, chronic and life-style-related illnesses. In view of this, our surgeons, apart from providing excellent specialized care, need to be more actively involved in the prevention of disease, the promotion of healthy lifestyles and the protection for our environment.

The Department of Health, in partnership with professional groups, civil society, related government agencies and other stakeholders in the health care system aims to institute reforms in the health sector in order to make quality health care, including surgical intervention and services, more accessible and affordable to our fellow Filipinos especially the poor.

We can only do this by closely working together as a team and sharing responsibilities in health as we pursue our common vision of a healthier Philippines.

Congratulations to the organizers of this Annual Clinical Congress.. To the participants, may this gathering be not just a venue to learn new knowledge and skills but also an avenue to realize our greater role in the rehabilitation of our health care system.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD, MSc.
Secretary of Health

Sincerest greetings, on behalf of the Officers and Board of Governors of the Philippine Medical Association, to the officers and members of the Philippine College of Surgeons on the occasion of its 57th Annual Clinical Congress.

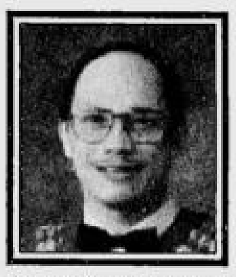
We cannot help but feel gratified and excited about this congress, as I feel a very vital affinity with the Philippine College of Surgeons. Needless to say, I am mighty proud to be among you, as I was, and I am, and will always be with the PCS forever.

This annual congress is something to look forward to by cutting specialists for the excellent and high quality topics. We are no less than awed by the magnitude of this gathering considering that a number of PCS affiliate societies simultaneously hold their respective postgraduate courses, symposia, and even an annual convention, making this congress truly all-encompassing. Guest lecturers from here and abroad to participate in the Plenary sessions, as well as in the "Kapihan" and "Tanghalian" sessions will surely make this gathering more exhilarating and stimulating. All these are reasons enough to make the PCS 57th Annual Clinical Congress another eventful milestone.

We applaud you, the men and women behind the helm of the PCS, in your pursuit for excellence. We thank you for your efforts in keeping in step with our aim of encouraging doctors to be at the vanguard in addressing threats to healthcare, thus giving substance to our theme, "Doctors at the Forefront – A Challenge for Change".

Congratulations. Mabuhay ang Philippine College of Surgeons.

GIL C. FERNANDEZ, MD, FPCS
President
Philippine Medical Association



I have the distinct honor and privilege of welcoming you, attendees and delegates to the 57th Annual Clinical Congress of the Philippine College of Surgeons on December 2-5, 2001 at the EDSA Shangri-la Plaza Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The global effects of the September 11 catastrophic events should not deter our resolve to pursue what we have always done as tradition, that surgeons of the land flock together in Manila in December of each year to learn new developments and technology, exchange views and ideas, review acquaintances and meet new friends. Our Committee on Conventions under our Vice President, Dr. Ernesto "Boy" Tan has done a wonderful job of putting together affiliate specialty societies of the College under one roof for four days to offer varied, comprehensive and relevant surgical topics, which will surely be of great interest to many of our Fellows, resident trainees and guests.

I look forward to your active participation in the scientific sessions. Particularly for Fellows, I anticipate your attendance in the Opening Ceremony, Annual Business Meeting, Fellowship Night, elections and Annual Dinner. Our friends in the pharmaceutical industry and other exhibitors also anticipate your visits to their booths and hospitality suites, of course, at the proper time of the day.

Likewise, kindly peruse the President's Report in the subsequent pages to give you a sense of what we have accomplished in 2001. Together we have done so much, yet there is still so much more that we can do for the College and our colleagues. It is imperative for us to continue to focus and perform the essentials at the least expense!

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank you all for the trust and confidence given me as the 52nd President of the College. It was, indeed, a pleasure serving you and I shall always treasure and cherish my experiences as the First among equals in 2001. I must also acknowledge and congratulate our Secretariat, headed by Ms. Annette G. Tolentino, who have done a terrific job this year to accomplish the tasks we have laid down for ourselves.

In behalf of my wife, Cecile and children, Michael Dennis, Charisse and Stephanie, I extend to one and all our advance greetings for a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

ALBERTO B. ROXAS, MD, FPCS
President
Philippine College of Surgeons

Welcome to the 57th Annual Clinical Congress of the Philippine College of Surgeons! We are once again privileged to be part of the most awaited events of the year. It is the time of the year when surgeons all over the country troop to the big city to participate in an affair that caters to a variety of interests. In the next few days beginning December 2 until 5, 2001, the congress will be held at the EDSA Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

We have invited several distinguished foreign guests who, despite the events of September 11, will continue to share their expertise and experience during the 9 Plenary sessions, 5 Kapihan and 4 Tanghalian sessions. These will be opportunities for exchange of ideas and views regarding current management issues for several common surgical problems. Simultaneously, The Philippine Society of General Surgeons, Philippine Association of Endoscopic Surgeons, Philippine Association of Thoracic & Cardiovascular Surgeons, Inc., Philippine Society for the Surgery of Trauma, and Philippine Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgeons will be holding their respective postgraduate courses. Not only will there be symposia by the different affiliate societies, the Philippine Society of Laparoscopic Surgeons will also be holding its 2nd Annual Convention during these time. Because of these interesting and totally packed events, we are proud to present the true clinical congress of all cutting specialties.

What makes this affair a much-anticipated one is because of the opportunity for further learning it presents, with the added advantage of providing a venue for renewing acquaintances, meeting old friends and making new ones – fostering camaraderie among the fellows and surgeons from all over.

Year after year, we are able to offer our fellows, guests, residents and candidates group a clinical congress where they grow in knowledge and enjoy fellowshipping together because we have special people who share in the work. For this year's congress, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to ALL who have made this possible, including the PCS Secretariat and our friends from the Pharmaceutical family.

We are glad that you were able to join us in this year. We hope that our meeting together will be memorable and enjoyable one.

ERNESTO C. TAN, MD, FPCS
Vice President
Overall Chairman
Philippine College of Surgeons

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The PCS Story
The First 65 years

Jesus G. Lizardo, MD, FPCS

The Philippine College of Surgeons started modestly as a small aggregate of 35 practicing surgeons headed by its founder, Dr. Gregorio T. Singian with a meeting on September 17, 1936 at the Hospital de San Juan de Dios in Intramuros. The By-Laws of the College was drafted by three illustrious surgeons – Drs. Carmelo Reyes, Antonio Villarama, and Herminio Velarde, approved on October 10, 1936. The 35 venerable pioneers established an unfaltering resolve of promoting the most respectable bracket of excellence of surgical practice in our country, the circumspect appraisal of membership through meticulous ranking and grading, and the affirmation of the highest exalted level of medical education and ethical practice of surgery. In its 65 years of existence the College has grown steadily larger and larger with the creation of 23 committees covering every aspect of institutional management and situational adjustments. Presently it has marshalled 11 chapters laid throughout the country, engineered to represent the authority of the College through their respective presidents, who report their decisions, activities, and plans to the PCS as often as possible.

With a Board of Regents consisting of 15 members, the College has now 2,050 Fellows coming from the various surgical specialty societies that have affiliated themselves to make the PCS a true phrenic paragon and laureate of all specialties concerned with surgery.

From 1936 to 1978, and with the disruption of conferences and scientific meetings during World War II which affected the Philippines in 1941 to 1944, most of the further patronage made by the PCS during those years of subjugation, was not a question of scientific advancement but more a mandatory rejoinder for rapport with the Imperial Japanese occupation army and its totalitarian graps over all basic legal instruments and survival statutes. The surgeons of that period were temporarily generally content treating patients rather than going into research or other scientific investigations.

The years after the 13th meeting of the Board of Regents on December 14, 1945 saw the rise of a new period of the College of Surgeons. The first surgical specialty journal called the Philippine Journal of Surgery was published in 1946 and finally shifted its name after several alterations to Philippine Journal of Surgical Specialties in 1959. Dr. Porfirio Recio first edited the journal till younger surgeons took on the editorship with the organ coming out of the press regularly every month. The distinction for this conscientious duty goes to Dr. Enrique T. Ona who edited the PJSS from 1973 to 1982, followed by Dr. Jesus G. Lizardo from 1983 to 1991, then further followed by Dr. Adriano V. Laudico from 1992 to the present.

Some of the important influences that shaped the casement of the College and gave it a substantial base are: in 1978, scholarship grants were given to PCS Fellows by the American College of Surgeons, and the first grantee was Dr. Wille N. Lagdameo; in 1979, Dr. Cresencio R. Abes sponsored a long-range plan to escalade the new gushing swell of continuing medical education to PCS Fellows through the development of a foundation to financially support scientific sessions, seminars and postgraduate courses.

In 1981, the Fellows Assistance Plan was put in force to serve colleagues who passed away. In the middle of 1981, the construction of the PCS building along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue in Quezon City was commenced and its completion was celebrated with the transfer of the Secretariat to the new building on November 11, 1985.

In 1990, the Relative Unit Value Standard was ordained by the Board of Regents, setting up revised advisory parameters in the area of charging professional fees, to avoid abuses against surgeons.

In 1994, through the intercession of Dr. Modesto O. Llamas, the Manpower Development Initiative was contrived with the Department of Health to upgrade and modernize the proficiency and suitability of surgeons employed in government hospitals. Then President Fidel V. Ramos declared the second week of December every year in Proclamation 312 as "Surgeon's Week."

In 1997, the PCS marked its 61st Foundation Day for the first time with simultaneous medical and surgical missions through out the country where there were viable PCS Chapters. Dr. Florentino C. Doble, as PCS President, blocked and was instrumental in the disenactment of Congress House Bill 5944, called the Anti-Malpractice Act of 1996, which was damaging, insufferable, unfair to surgical and medical practitioners, and politically contrived. If the Bill became law, it would unmistakably increase the costs of guarantee against unnecessary litigations or other medico legal liabilities.

The following years witnessed what present PCS President Dr. Alberto B. Roxas calls the sustained commitment of our Fellows with the excellent and generous support of the organization's leadership for the continued growth and development of the College even through difficult times. The PCS now maintains a website that will be frequently updated. A Memorandum of Agreement between the Department of Health, the Philippine Society of Anesthesiologists, and United Laboratories, signed on September 17, 2001, will direct a joint venture called Specialists to the Provinces Project. Specialists will be fielded in underserved areas in Batanes, Bohol, and Surigao del Norte.

The Ad Hoc Committee on College Goals headed by Dr. Edgardo R. Cortez held a workshop last September to reiterate the proposed vision, mission, and values for the College. The vision is to be recognized as the leader in Philippine surgery; the mission is to produce competent, compassionate, ethical, and socially responsible surgeons, committed to preserve and promote health by providing the highest standard of surgical practice through continuing surgical education, relevant research, a proactive approach to health-related legislation and policy-making, and upliftment of the welfare of its members.

Early in 2001, there had been a devolution of accreditation in general surgery to the newly formed Philippine Society of General Surgeons (PSGS). On January 1, 2002 everything under general surgery will be handled by the PSGS. With this event materializing, the Philippine College of Surgeons is now the impeccable umbrella organization of all the cutting specialties, and its consolidation is its greatest accomplishment in its 65 years of existence.

PHILIPPINE COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
57th Annual Clinical Congress

EDSA Shangrila Hotel
December 2-5, 2001

Foreign Faculty

NORMAN RICH, MD, FACS

retired colonel of the US Medical Corps, is 66 years old, from Pinal County, Arizona, graduated in medicine from the Stanford University Medical School, California in 1960. He is currently associate professor of Surgery, George Washington University and professor of surgery and military medicine at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland. His honorary appointments include the following: faculty opponent Goteburgs Universitat, Gothenberg, Sweden, 1974 and 1977; miembro honorario, Medicina y Ciencias de la Salud, Uniberidad Catolica de Chile, 1977, Santiago de Chile: profesor visitante, Cirugia Vascular, Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, Bogota, Columbia, 1981; faculty opponent, Helsinki University, Helsinki, Finland, 1990; honorary professor, 3rd Military Medical University, China, 1997; and honoris causa, Mayab University, Merida, Mexico, 2000. He has so many awards from universities and countries all over the world. He has made no less than 50 excellent scientific movies and tapes, is visiting professor to about 75 institutions in the USA and abroad. He has written a book on vascular trauma, and is co-editor or co-author of four other books. He has made more than 350 abstracts and papers emphasizing on trauma and vascular surgery including basic and clinical research.

DAVID C. WHERRY, MD, FACS

of Pawnee City, Nebraska, 75 years old, graduated as MD at the George Washington School of Medicine in 1952, is professor of Surgery, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUSH), Bethesda, Maryland, since 1991, and clinical professor of Surgery, George Washington University, Washington, DC, sinc 1989.

He is senior consultant in Surgery, Department of State; in general surgery at Nottingham Health Authority, England; and military consultant in general surgery of the USAF Surgeon General.

A writer of several book chapters covering varied general surgical subjects, he has published more than 39 important papers.

HERAND ABCARIAN, MD, FACS

60 years old, graduated from the Tehran University School of Medicine in 1965, is the Turi Josefson professor and chairman of the Department of Surgery, University of Illinois College of Medicine in Chicago. He is certified in colon and rectal surgery by the American College of Surgeons and has written 20 chapters in various surgical books and published more than 114 full length papers.

MICHAEL ROBERT MAROHN, MD, FACS

is a colonel of the USAF medical corps, associate professor, vice-chair of the Department of Surgery of the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland and chief of general surgery and surgical critical care at Milford Hall, USAF Medical Center from 1979 to 1982, and also spent sometime at the University of Illinois in Chicago and the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. His several military appointments has taken him to places such as the United Kingdom, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, but presently he is based in the Uniformed Services University in Bethesda. He has written more than 20 papers, his subjects ranging from laparoscopic surgery, intraoperative ultrasound, hypothermia, and bile duct injuries.

LAU WAN YEE JOSEPH

Lau Wan Yee Joseph finished medicine in the University of Hongkong in 1972. He trained in the major regional hospitals of the colony, including the Prince of Wales Hospital, Queen Mary Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and Princess Margaret Hospital. He spent some time in the United Kingdom and he returned to become senior lecturer in the Chinese University in 1989. Subsequently he was appointed professor of Surgery in 1993 and was finally made chairman of the Department of Surgery in 1996 and holds that position up to presently.
He is the president-elect of the International Hepatopancreatobiliary Association and is a visiting professor to medical universities in Guangzhou, Beijing, Shanghai, Foshan and Wuhan in China, as well as in Sweden, South Africa, Singapore, India, Australia, and the Philippines. He reviews several journals and is with the editorial board of 10 international publications. He is also a member of 14 international and 10 local surgical societies. He has authored over 250 papers which had been published in international journals, written chapters in 15 books, made 29 reviews and delivered more than 55 lectures to various societies and medical schools all over the world. His other interests include gastrointestinal bleeding, colorectal cancer, and antibiotics.

EDWARD WAI-HEI TO

Edward Wai-He-To attended the King's College of Medicine and Dentistry of the University of London from 1979 to 1983, and the University of Leicester Medical School in England from 1991 to 1994. He is presently associate professor in the Department of Surgery, the Chinese University of Hongkong, Prince of Wales Hospital in Shatin, Hongkong. From 1983 to 1998 he obtained several eligibilities such as Bachelor in Dental Surgery, Bachelor in Medicine and Surgery, England; Fellow of: the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons, the faculty of Dentistry of the Royal College of Surgeons, College of Surgeons of Hongkong, College of Dental Surgeons of Hongkong. Dr. To is also a member of numerous professional bodies, mostly located in Hongkong. He has written some 127 papers of which he was a senior author of about 108. He has also prepared 75 abstracts and 47 index papers. He has contributed two chapter to a scientific book. A very enthusiastic researcher, Dr. To has expressed his major interest in head and neck surgical oncology, skull base surgery, nasopharyngectomy, facial trauma and reconstructive surgery, and in parotidectomy.

LEONG HENG TAT, MBBS(HK), FRCS (Edin), FHKAM (Surgery)

Chief of Service, Department of Surgery
Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, HongKong

ROLANDO M. MENDIOLA, MD

President, Society of Philippine Surgeons in America (SPSA)
Director, Midwest Laser Surgery, LTD, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

All roads lead to EDSA Shangri-la Hotel as it throws its doors wide open to welcome Fellows and Guests of the Philippine College of Surgeons attending the 57th Annual Clinical Congress, December 2-5, 2001. Organizers led by Dr. Ernesto C. Tan expect over 2,000 participants as advanced registrations have come close to the 1,000 mark.

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Standing (l-r): Doctors Arthur V. Tolentino, Arnulfo D. Soares, Jr., Manuel M. Mariano, Antonio L. Anastacio, Esteban V. Bolnes, Diosdeo R. Alesna and Arsenio Pascual, III, Governors
Not in picture: Doctors Venancio Garduce, Jr., Edilberto S. Torres, Rolando A. Florendo, Wilfredo A. Polldo, Crispin C. Go, Guillermo B. Barroa, Jr., Gabriel L. Martinez, James B. Jonquino and Leonardo L. Mangubat, Governors.

OPENING PROGRAM

Official opening shall take place on Sunday at the Isla Ballroom with welcome remarks by Dr. Alberto B. Roxas. The early morning program includes the induction of new Fellows and the G.T. Singian Memorial Lecture to be given by Dr. Cresencio R. Abes.

An extensive pharmaceutical exhibition put up by participating drug companies shall be opened for viewing immediately after the opening program.

The Luncheon Business Meeting is slated at 12:00 Noon. The two hour meeting shall address various issues and concerns affecting the College and which need to be subjected to closer scrutiny by the general assembly.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM SKED

The busy scientific schedule commences with the early afternoon postgraduate course by the Philippine Society of General Surgeons, two (2) symposia to be staged by the Philippine Spine Society and the Philippine Society of Transplant Surgeons, PCS Unilab Research Paper Contest and the Interactive Session on "Biliary Enteric Bypass" by the Philippine Association of Endoscopic Surgeons. A total of nine (9) plenary lectures are distributed in the four-day schedule.

The scientific package also boasts of simultaneous sessions, satellite symposia, cine clinics, panel discussions and the perennial favorite, Kapihan sa PCS. It gathers more than fifty authorities on various surgical topics. At any one time, up to six sessions will run simultaneously to enable attendees to select topics of special interest to them.

HIGHLIGHTS

Aside from the hectic scientific program schedule, also considered as potential crowd drawers are the social activities: Fellowship Night on December 2, also at the Isla Ballroom, Annual Dinner and Induction of the 2002 Board of Regents.

PCS Fellows shall troop to the polls to elect the 2002 Board of Regents. 19 Fellows will vie for 15 Board seats.

As in previous years, candidates' brochures were prepared and distributed for voters' information and guidance.

The official closing program is set on December 5 at 2:00 PM.

COMMITTEE ON CONVENTIONS

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Over-all Chairman

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Arrangements

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rain showers.

SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI 33° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 24° Lo 14°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 16°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 19°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 32° Lo 14°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 30° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	HI 29° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 31° Lo 22°
Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 27° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 28° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 31° Lo 23°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/12/01/01

ROUNDUP

Christmas in Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—The city's Christmas activities were officially launched yesterday to boost tourist arrivals here during the holidays. Dubbed "Balik Baguio sa Pasko 2001," the series of activities kicked off with a parade and simultaneous lighting of Christmas lights along the city's major thoroughfares. The activities include the "City of Lights," a Christmas lights design contest, a children's Mardi Gras, the Philippine Military Academy cadets' day and performances by different artists.

Denise Enriquez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Death for rapist

BAGUIO CITY—A Kalinga judge sentenced to death a man for raping and killing his neighbor three years ago, after DNA tests matched the accused's sperm found on the victim. Judge Milnar Lammawin of the Kalinga regional trial court sentenced Joel Yatar, of Rizal town, for the rape-slay of Kathlyn Uba in 1998. Lammawin said the DNA test result confirmed that Yatar raped Uba. It was the first time that such piece of evidence was used in Kalinga, reports said.

Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Raped girl found dead

BAGUIO CITY—A girl was raped and killed in Tuba, Benguet, on Wednesday. Supt. Vladimir Villaseñor, regional chief of the Philippine National Police crime laboratory, said the victim, whose body was dumped in a shallow ravine, was stabbed six times and her skull was crushed. He said laboratory tests confirmed that the victim was repeatedly raped.

Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Women against violence

BAGUIO CITY—The women's group Innabuyog-Gabriela Cordillera launched on Nov. 25 a campaign to end violence against women. The group, in a statement, said the campaign aims to highlight the worsening exploitation and discrimination of women in the face of globalization. Innabuyog members also marched down Session Road carrying placards with slogans to stop violence against women. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Landslide buries 2

LEGAZPI CITY—Two persons are believed dead after a landslide buried their house around 9 a.m. Tuesday in Sitio Batag, Barangay Bugtong, Pio Corpuz, Masbate. Police identified the victims as Jason Alinso-ot, 22, and his brother Jeger, 14. The two were inside their house when heavy rains occurred, causing a part of a mountain to collapse and bury Alinso-ot's house and the two brothers. Jason's son Eric and wife Myrna survived the disaster and sought the help of rescuers. The rescuers have not yet found the victims as of late Thursday.

Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA abducts farmer

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 13 suspected New People's Army rebels abducted a farmer in Sitio Curvada, Barangay Pasig, Claveria, Masbate, at around 5 p.m. Monday. Police said the victim, Rodolfo Segarido, 34, was taking a rest in his house when the armed men arrived. Segarido's hands were tied and he was dragged toward Sitio Kiputol of the same village. The family has not heard from the abductors since.

Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Fake P500 bills

POLANGUI, Albay—Police arrested and detained Eddie Ebanes, 39, and Samuel Agviola, 37, both residents of Barangay Puerto, Cagayan de Oro City, in connection with at least 17 pieces of P500 bills they seized on Saturday from suspected syndicate members. The bills had almost the same serial numbers: 11 pieces bear serial numbers MG 770577, while six bear the serial numbers NM902611. Ebanes and Agviola are facing criminal charges. *Rey Nasol and Tony S. Macasinag, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Alert on LPG cylinders

LEGAZPI CITY—The Department of Trade and Industry Bicol regional office has warned the public about the proliferation of substandard liquefied petroleum gas cylinders. The Bureau of Fire Protection has reported that exploding gas cylinders have caused several fires in the region. The DTI in Masbate said the substandard cylinders have the following serial numbers: 0000-09574, 00001-09504, 00001-11000, 00001-13681 and 00004-00250. LPG dealers who fail to replace defective cylinders would face prosecution, the DTI said. *Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

COLA, NOT WAGE HIKE

Only ₱10 for E. Visayas workers

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY-An organization of 220 small and medium enterprises in Leyte is willing to give only P10 in Cost of Living Allowance (Cola) to workers and not an increase in minimum wages.

The Leyte Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which employs about 2,000 workers, made this position on Wednesday during a public consultation conducted by the Regional Tripartite Wage and Productivity Board in Eastern Visayas (RTWPB-8) in this city.

LCCI Executive Director Jaime Dechos said it would be impossible for the employers to grant a wage increase because of the economic slump they are suffering from now.

"As a soft relief, we are willing to grant at least P10 to the workers not as a wage increase but as a Cola," he said during the consultation on Wednesday.

Dechos said the additional Cola would not worsen the financial constraints of businesses. "If we are to give a wage increase, it could be translated to overtime pay and bonus," he said.

If the labor groups would press for a wage hike, Dechos warned that the immediate effect would be the mass lay-off of thousands of workers. There are more than one million workers in Eastern Visayas.

"We ask the workers to sacrifice with us to ride through the economic crisis (that we are experiencing right now)," he said.

Roger Trinidad, president of the Bethany Workers Association, criticized Dechos' arguments, saying the management always used the economic crisis to justify their denial of the labor's demand for a wage hike.

"They have been using that (economic crisis) as their justification. They should also understand our plight," he said.

Trinidad said that in a recent meeting among different labor groups in the city, they agreed not to insist on the P78 across-the-board increase as proposed by the Ormoc City-based Associated Labor Union-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP).

The ALU-TUCP filed its petition before the wage board for an across-the-board increase of P78 last September.

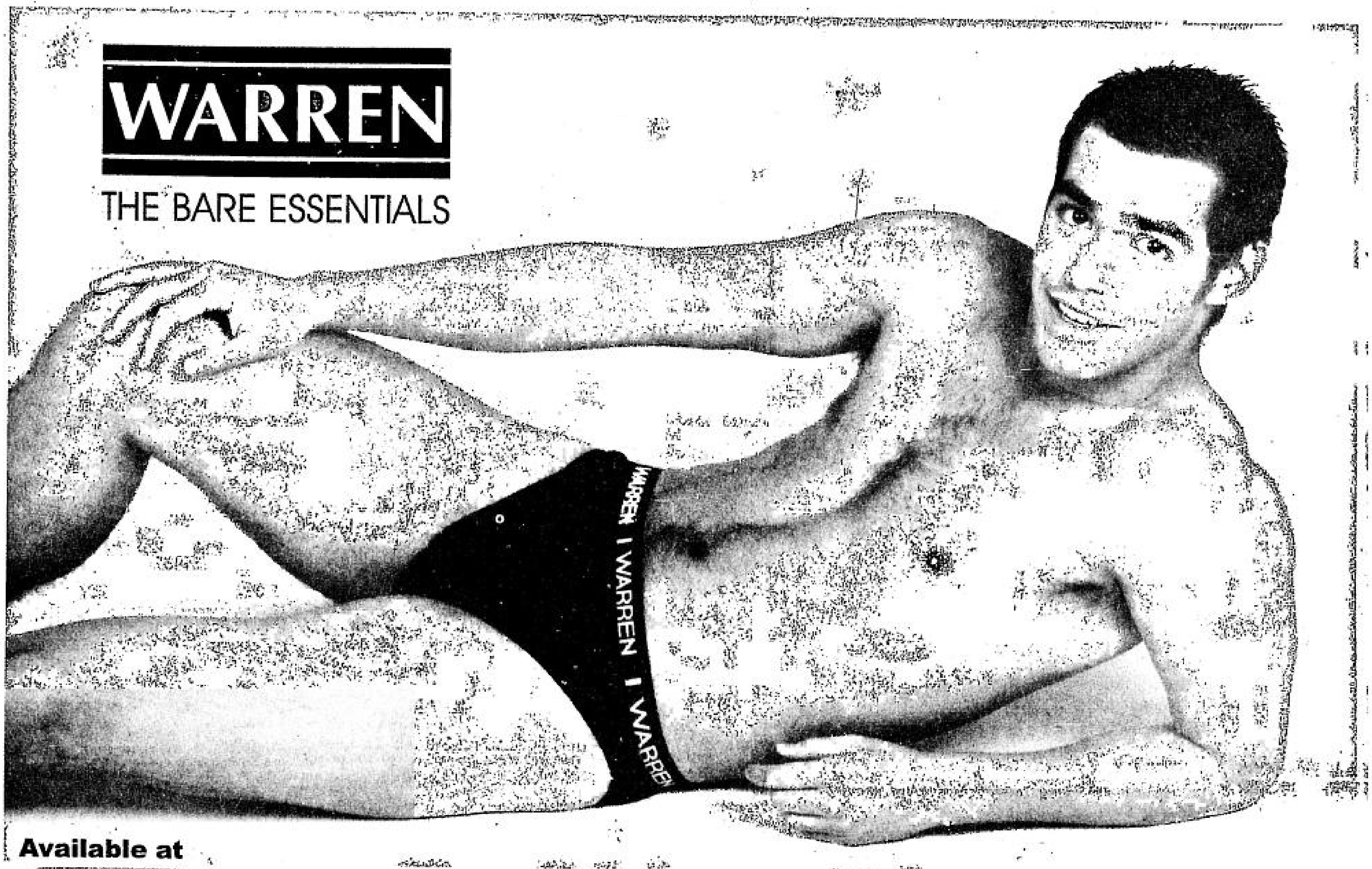
Vicente Casilan, ALU-TUCP secretary general, had said the salaries should be increased by P78 because the "ideal wage" in the region is P255.

Right now, however, Trinidad said they would be willing to accept "any wage increase as long as it is reasonable." He did not say what would be a "reasonable" amount for the workers.

Currently, non-agricultural workers in Leyte receive a daily minimum wage of P177 and P173 for workers in other areas in the region. The daily minimum wage for agricultural workers in Leyte is pegged at P158 and P154 for other areas.

Lawyer Florencio Aguilos, Eastern Visayas wage board secretary, said the wage board will meet this month to discuss the inputs generated from the consultations.

"We will now collate all these (inputs) for deliberations," he said. "The RTWPB (wage board) is happy that our deliberations will not be that difficult because we have the figures to work on."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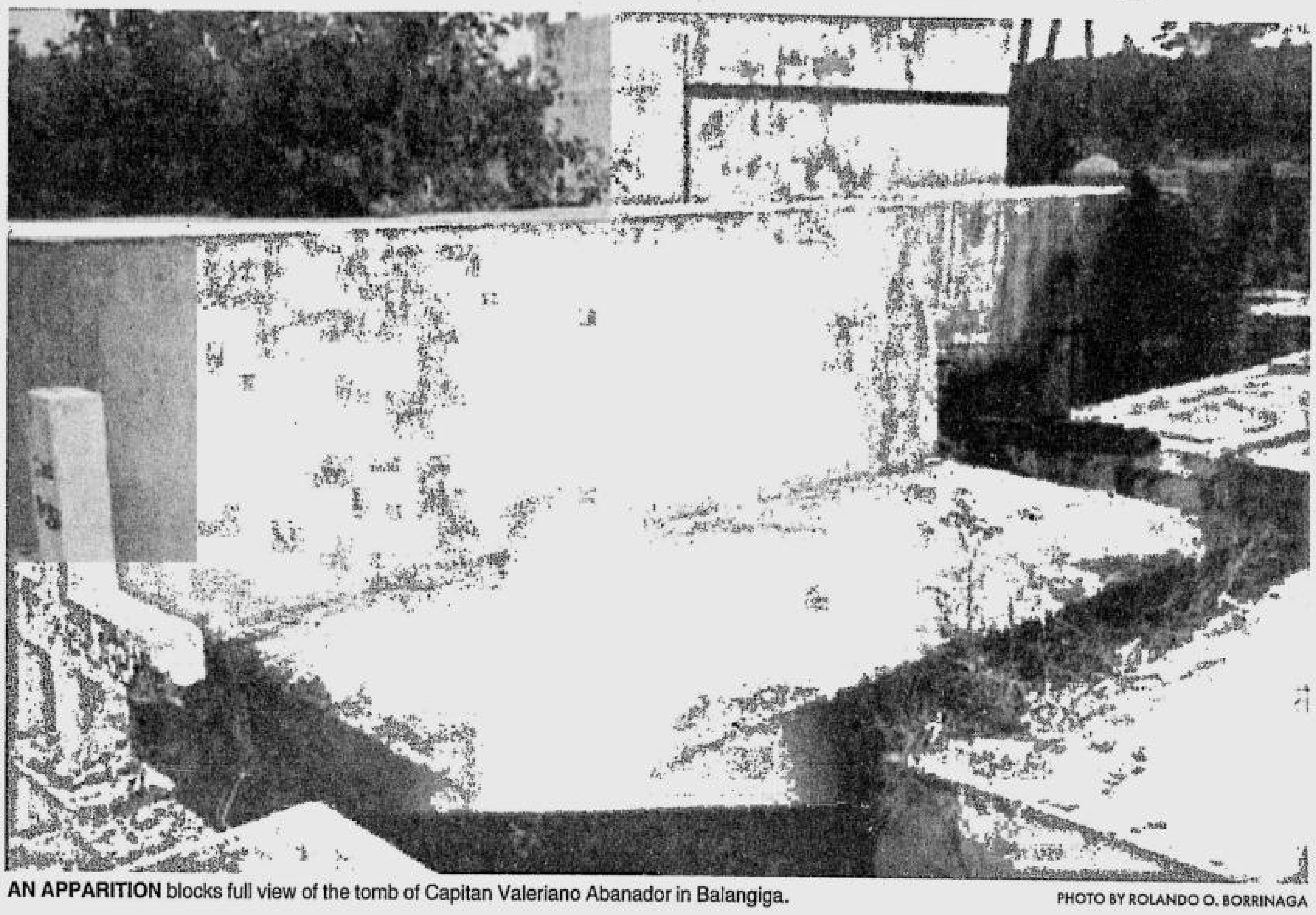
Balangiga heroes send eerie messages

BY ROLANDO O. BORRINAGA
Tacloban City

BELIEVE it or not. While researching on the Balangiga Massacre that happened a century ago, we members of the Balangiga Research Group (BRG) have not only received moral support from living people. From eerie prints of photographs, we have also received prodding messages from each of the two greater heroes on opposite sides of that conflict.



AN APPARITION blocks full view of the tomb of Capitan Valeriano Abanador in Balangiga.

PHOTO BY ROLANDO O. BORRINAGA

These heroes were *Capitan* Valeriano Abanador, the overall commander of the successful attack on the American garrison, and Pvt. Adolph Gamlin, the mobile guard who was the first American soldier to be attacked in Balangiga on Sept. 28, 1901.

The entire attack virtually started with Abanador's success at grabbing Gamlin's rifle and smashing its butt in his head. Although sprawled and given up for dead in most accounts, Gamlin actually survived the crushing blow, was able to grab another rifle during the melee, fire the critical initial shots that repulsed the attack, and forced Abanador to call a retreat by the Filipino attackers.

The key role of Abanador, like the official coverup of the Balangiga conflict, was suppressed by the American attribution that the mastermind of the attack was the non-Balangigan formal leader of the resistance in southeastern Samar.

And the key role of Gamlin was eclipsed by the accounts of glib-talking comrades who told fantastic tales of dozens of Filipino deaths from their blazing guns, and by Gamlin's own humility and lifelong refusal to glorify his own feat in Balangiga.

A century after the conflict, these two greater heroes in Balangiga still managed to send eerie messages from the spiritual realm. Please suspend your logic and scientific judgment for a moment while I tell you about the occult related to our Balangiga involvement.

Abanador's tomb

Balangiga in southern Samar was again a quiet and sleepy town in the morning of Sept. 29, following a weeklong frenzy of activities that culminated in the centennial commemoration of the "Balangiga Encounter" graced by thousands of revelers and guests the day before.

Right after breakfast, Bob Couttie (the British screenwriter of "Goodbye America" and "Legacy" movies) and I walked to the Balangiga cemetery to visit the tombs of known Balangiga heroes and to take pictures.

Our host, Mrs. Aurea Amano, made arrangements for us to be accompanied by the cemetery caretaker who lives next door. But we went ahead without her, confident that we could find our target graves by ourselves. We were proven wrong.

After about 30 minutes of futile search among the tombs and the graves, two elderly female caretakers of the cemetery arrived. We asked for the location of the tomb of Abanador. Only one of them knew where it was, and we were led to an unmarked tomb that we could not have found without a guide.

Bob and I took pictures of Abanador's tomb and that of Pedro Duran, another participant of the Balangiga attack. We also asked for the grave or tomb of Casiana Nacionales, the lone woman privy to the Balangiga plot, but neither of our guides knew where this was.

From the cemetery, Bob and I returned to our foster house and then we proceeded to the bank of the Balangiga River. Again, with the help of Mrs. Amano, we hired a *banca* and a boatman for our companions, Jean Wall and her brother, Richard Adolph "Dick" Gamlin, who had come all the way from the US to attend the Balangiga centennial rites. They wanted to experience a similar *banca* ride that their father, Pvt. Adolph Gamlin, went through during the escape of the mostly wounded American survivors to Bassey in 1901.

It was time to leave for Tacloban after an hour of *banca* ride up and down the river. Bob, Jean and Dick left Tacloban for Manila the next day, Bob for his base in Subic, and Jean and Dick, for the US in two more days.

In Tacloban, it took six more weeks before the film in my camera was consumed, after which I brought it to the photo shop for developing and printing.

Only one photo

As a matter of habit, I usually take 2-3 shots of important sites, scenes or landmarks with my camera. At the Balangiga cemetery, I took two shots of the tomb of Pedro Duran.

I, therefore, could not explain why I only took one shot of Abanador's tomb. But I recall I was disheartened at that moment by the unmarked and neglected state of the tomb of the man whose heroism was a central focus of the activities the week before.

In the entire roll of film, only the shot of Abanador's tomb showed some defect—a white blot at the center of the photograph. Upon closer examination at home, I realized this was no ordinary blot.

Above a straight line near the bottom of the film, I had photographed a floating white apparition, shaped like the upper half of a sitting headless body with its back toward the camera.

A detached oblong-shaped figure, faintly resembling an old man's profile and etched on the flat cement wall overlooking Abanador's tomb, completed the human form for the white apparition, but with its head reversed and facing the camera.

Inferred message

I was not scared at all by the apparition in the cemetery photograph. I heard that during his old age in the 1950s, Abanador had asked lawyer Dominador Amano, now also deceased, to write a Filipino version of the Balangiga conflict.

After having lodged in Amano's house during two separate visits to Balangiga, I simply inferred the message (using Filipino phenomenology) that I have to pick up from what Amano had left behind, and also pursue my advocacy for the return of the bells to the town.

I relayed my observation on the cemetery photo to the other BRG members, Bob Couttie in Subic and Jean Wall in the US. Bob did not notice anything unusual in the pictures he took of Abanador's tomb.

But Jean disclosed for the first time a similar experience with eerie photographs she had taken in Wyoming and Nebraska in 1998. She sent me scanned copies of three photographs that showed paranormal handiwork of her father.

Jean's campaign

In late 1997, Jean went high profile with her campaign for official recognition of her father's feat in Balangiga. Her case was picked up by mainstream US media and added mileage to the Philippine government's campaign to have the two Bells of Balangiga at the F.E. Warren Air Force Base in Wyoming returned to the country.

In mid-1998, Jean undertook a pilgrimage to Wyoming to visit the memorial of the two famous Bells of Balangiga, and to Nebraska, to visit her father's grave and the Nebraska City Post Office, where he had worked until retirement.

By that time, the "third bell" of Balangiga with a US Army unit in Korea had surfaced, and Bob and I had cast doubt on the authenticity of the Wyoming bells.

In her speech before the influential Wyoming veterans, who played a key role in keeping the bells on US soil, Jean warned about the basic impropriety of having "another headstone on your grave."

She was alluding to the Balangiga label of the contested bells in Wyoming, whose origins were then put in doubt.

Jean's figurative language virtually turned literal in three photographs she took during her pilgrimage.

Eerie photos

In Wyoming, Jean took a picture with her camera of the Balangiga Bells Memorial, a curved brick structure that displayed two large bells reportedly taken from Balangiga after the fighting in September 1901. But the photo that came out was partly overlaid by images around Gamlin's graveyard in Nebraska.

A clear photo of the graveyard showed the wreath in front of a pot of flowers, forming a right triangle with the headstone to the left of the flowerpot. But in the bells' memorial photo, the wreath was aligned with the headstone and the pot of flowers. The wreath was also positioned in the center of the brick structure and the headstone was directly under the niche occupied by the relic we have identified as the 1863 bell.

Jean took a close shot of the 1963 bell to get its details and inscriptions. But the final print showed only the external outline of the bell in its niche. In place of the surface details were images of the grass on Gamlin's grave with the headstone at the bottom.

In another photo, the faint mouth portion of a bell encased a clear picture of the Nebraska City Post Office Building where Gamlin retired from his government career.

The technicians at the photo shop theorized that the film inside Jean's camera probably slipped and this caused a double exposure of the film. The "film slip" theory might explain the case for a single frame in a roll of film, but it could not explain the overlapping of Nebraska images on Wyoming scenes in three pictures from the same roll of film. The latter would have involved actual rewinding of the film, which is technically impossible with the film inside the camera.

Jean said she was greatly affected by the eerie pictures she took in 1998 but kept quiet about them until I brought up the parallel phenomenon. Her own experience with the paranormal had also urged her to keep pursuing official recognition for her father.

Proofs of bells' origin

Around the middle of this year, some Wyoming veterans taunted our group (the BRG) to show independent proofs of the Balangiga origin of the bells in Wyoming. We took the challenge and, in the end, we were able to trace documents that could prove the 1889 bell in Wyoming (with the name of Fr. Agustin Delgado) and the 1895 bell in Korea (with the name of Fr. Bernardo Aparicio) indeed came from Balangiga.

Only the case of the 1863 bell remained somewhat problematic.

Since 1998, I have argued and claimed here in the INQUIRER that it was the small bell in Korea that rang in Balangiga during the attack. This claim was deemed credible and had developed quite a large following, including the National Historical Institute (NHI), over the next three years.

But with Jean's eerie photographs as new evidence, I take back my old claim. The overlaid images of Gamlin's headstone on separate photos of the 1863 bell in Wyoming provide more than sufficient paranormal proof that this was the church bell that rang in Balangiga in the morning of Sept. 28, 1901.

Believe it or not.

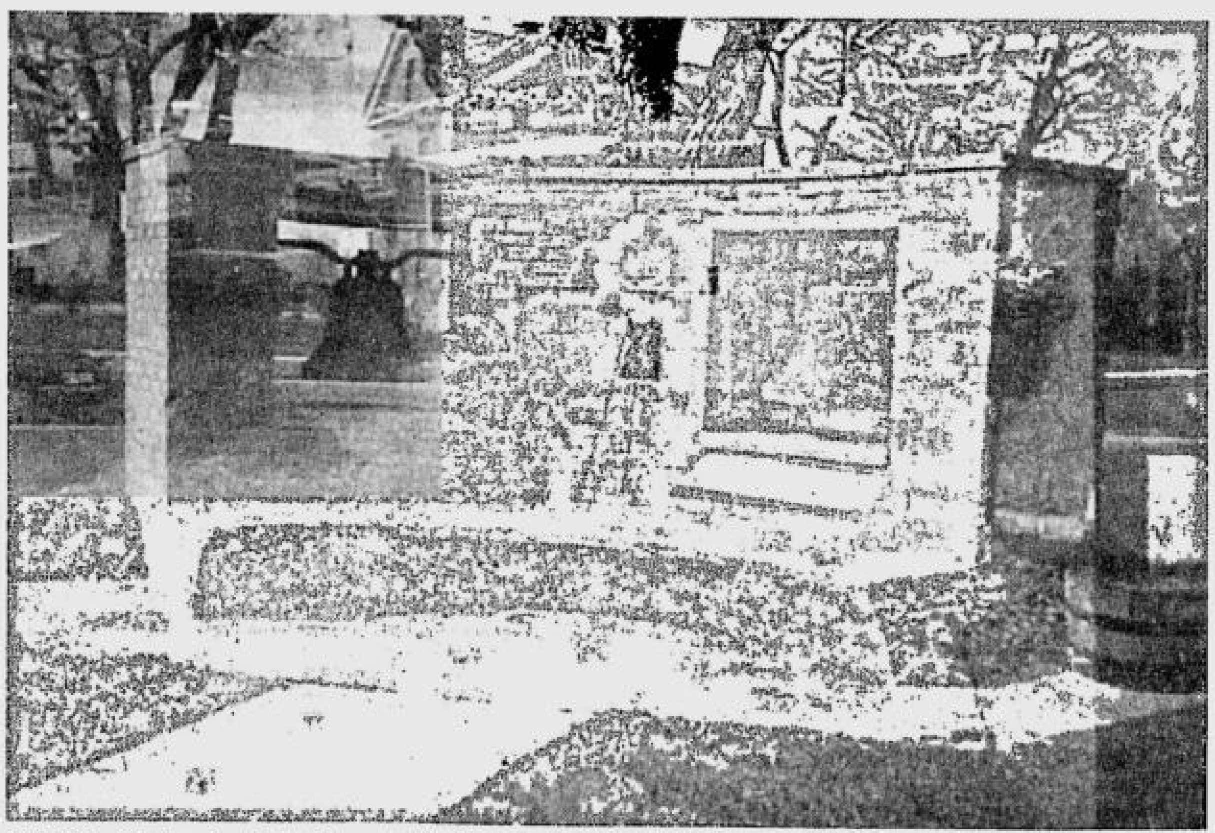


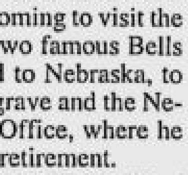
PHOTO of Balangiga Bells Memorial in Wyoming, mysteriously overlayed with items from Gamlin's grave in Nebraska.

PHOTO BY JEAN WALL

That game of golf

BREAKAWAY

Ivan P. Suansing



"PLAYING golf," said Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza with an air of infallibility, "is not an offense."

Local policemen agreed, and on cue promptly ended their "investigation" of reports that their boss and other ranking officers were spotted playing golf with controversial businessman Wellington Lim in Cebu City last Nov. 10.

Wellington and his brother Peter are subjects of an ongoing inquiry by the House committee on dangerous drugs.

At least two witnesses, the Lims' former workers, have testified on the brothers' alleged shabu business and links to a Hong Kong syndicate. The brothers deny the charges.

The "rendezvous" at the Cebu Golf and Country Club in Banilad last Nov. 10 came in the wake of complaints that police hadn't been doing enough to nail the Lim brothers.

(What is it in this Banilad golf course that attracts police generals and alleged drug lords? Police Regional Director Avelino Razon Jr. was also seen there blasting from sand and water traps with Kim Wong, a restaurateur with certain Hong Kong business connections, at the height of the Senate investigation of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's alleged criminal activities.)

In the last hearing, Rep. Antonio Cuenco, committee chair, roasted the heads of the local police and anti-narcotics units and the National Bureau and Investigation for failing to produce a report on the Lims, and their "partnership" with Ben Go, a suspected Taiwanese drug lord.

The lawmen's inaction so incensed Rep. Nerissa Soon-Ruiz, a committee member, that she threatened to lop off a good chunk of the PNP intelligence fund.

Now, the Mandaue City representative has an idea why.

With Wellington's golf course friendship with PNP chief Mendoza and police top brass in the region, can an ordinary officer muster enough courage to go after the businessman and his brother Peter?

Police apologists later painstakingly pointed out that Mendoza "didn't actually play" with Wellington Lim, as the controversial businessman was a flight behind.

The hair-splitting didn't work because Wellington teed off with the rest of Mendoza's group from Camp Crame, and was actually seen in a cozy chat with Mendoza himself.

If there was any debate about Wellington's clout, this episode ended it.

What was it that Col. Victor Corpus warned about?

* * *

DANGEROUS PROPOSAL. While it might have been clothed with noble intentions, President Macapagal-Arroyo's "appeal" to advertisers to use their influence on the media to shape news reports should be a cause for worry to all media organizations.

Speaking during the recent Philippine Advertising Congress in Cebu City, Ms Macapagal reminded advertisers they had the power to convince newspaper editors and broadcast executives to "highlight positive stories and showcase the country's good points."

Although the President stopped short of saying that the media must be compelled to give prominence to the "good news," whatever Her Excellency meant by good news, what she wanted done constitutes undue interference in editorial decisions, and therefore violates the basic principles of press freedom.

Ms Macapagal should steer clear of this tack, using advertisers to pressure the media, a favorite tactic of the man she supplanted, former president Joseph Estrada.

Newspapers, radio and TV stations may be able to turn back the challenges of the most oppressive governments, but they are almost always vulnerable to attacks by those who keep them alive.

An Ilonggo columnist once loudly complained about a defective toy gun he had bought in a popular mall for his son's Christmas present. The mall struck back by pulling out all its ads from the columnist's nascent paper, which ultimately had no choice but to throw in the towel. The list of similar examples is a long one.

If she wants to kill the free press and prevent it from performing its traditional role as a watchdog of government—and promote her political ambitions—the President certainly knows what to do.

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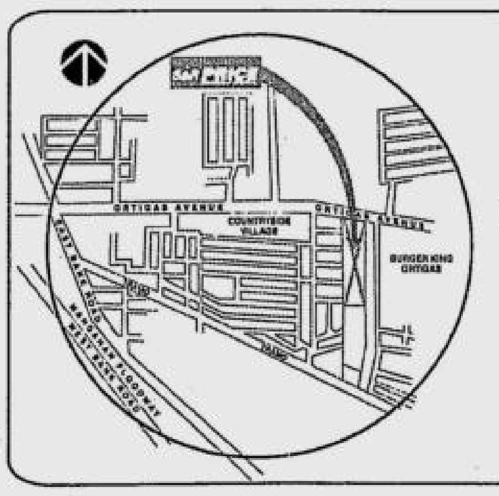

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Osama bin Laden can't run forever–Bush

(From page A1)

joined US troops and local tribal fighters in the battle for Kandahar, the Taliban's spiritual capital in the south of the country, a commander said.

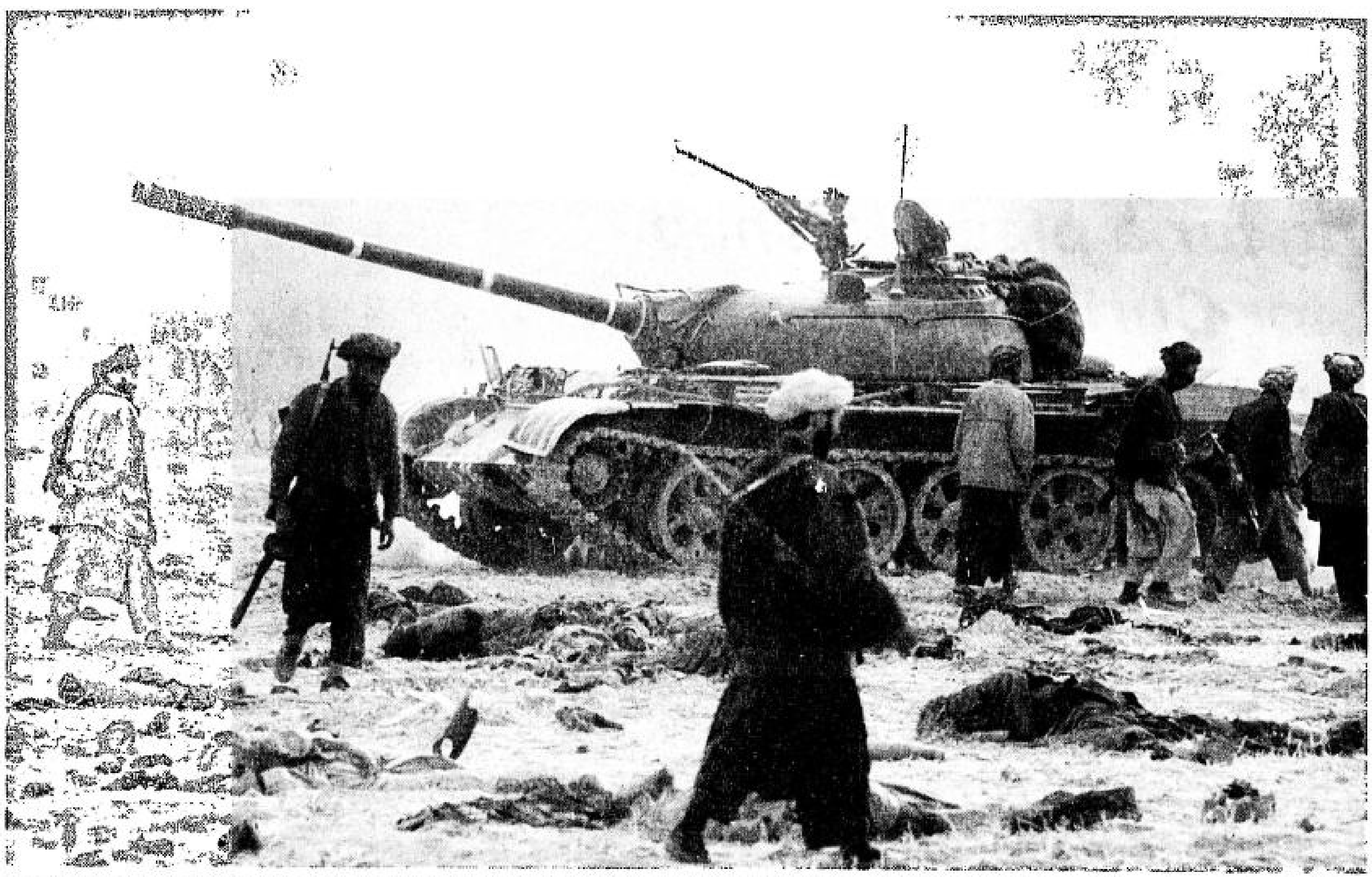
"I expect in one week the Taliban will fall in Kandahar, maybe earlier," Northern Alliance commander Besmillah Khan told AFP, adding that the disparate forces were coordinating their efforts on the ground.

Kandahar is the birthplace of the Taliban movement that seized power over Afghanistan in 1996. As such, it could be a natural place to stand and fight.

"There is fighting close to the city," he said in Kabul, after receiving reports from his commanders in Kandahar province.

But Pentagon officials said they had no information indicating the Northern Alliance had deployed a significant number of forces in Kandahar, and expressed concern over a presence of the loose coalition of ethnic Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara minorities in the traditional lands of majority Pashtun tribes.

Rapid advances by the Northern Alliance have fueled concern of renewed tribal infighting in the country, wracked by decades of civil war.



GETTY IMAGES

BODIES litter a prison fortress at Mazar-e-Sharif after three days of fighting between pro-Taliban prisoners and Northern Alliance forces including British and US special operations forces.

Power-sharing talks

But rival Afghan groups meeting at a hilltop hotel outside Bonn were upbeat, saying they were poised to strike a power-sharing deal and were working to hammer out the details.

"We hope that we reach a complete agreement in the two coming days that will bring peace to the country," said Yunus Qanooni, who heads the Northern Alliance's delegation to the UN-sponsored talks.

The four groups at the meeting, dominated by the alliance and representatives of the Rome-based former king Mohammed Zahir Shah, were locked in talks on setting up a parliamentary-style supreme council and a Cabinet-style interim authority.

US warplanes have backed the anti-Taliban advances by bombing strategic installations of the hardline militia and Bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Bush on Thursday hailed the "good, steady, significant progress" made in the military campaign in Afghanistan.

"We've got al-Qaida on the run, too . . . they think they can run, but they can't run forever, because we will patiently, diligently pursue them until they are brought to justice," Bush said in a speech to federal prosecutors.

A senior Taliban official said Thursday that the militia had suffered "countless" deaths since the start of the seven-week-old US-led military campaign but that its communications were so crippled it could not keep track of the toll.

The Taliban's supreme leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar, has ordered his followers to fight on and become martyrs as opposition forces closed in on the Islamic militia's last stronghold of Kandahar.

Some reports suggested Taliban forces had dug in and were ready for battle despite heavy US air strikes against their defenses.

However, there were other claims of defections from Taliban ranks while tribal and northern alliance fighters headed toward the city's eastern outskirts, apparently triggering heavy fighting.

"The fight has now begun. It is the best opportunity to achieve martyrdom," Omar was quoted as saying by one Taliban official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Omar's defiant words contrast with past behavior by Taliban forces who fled other Afghan cities in the face of attack.

Along with hundreds of Afghan Taliban fighters, hardline foreign Muslim militiamen, loyal to Bin Laden, are also thought to be in the city, 450 km southwest of the Afghan capital, Kabul.

Rear Admiral John Stufflebeem, the deputy director of operations of the Joint Staff, said the Taliban's control over their forces had been "fractured," with some commanders negotiating the surrender of their troops and others vowing to fight to the death.

Intel chief defects?

In a further setback for the militia, the Taliban's intelligence chief was believed to be among senior officials who defected to opposition forces in Afghanistan, US officials said Thursday.

Cheney did not confirm reports that the Taliban's intelligence chief had defected, nor reports that top members of the al-Qaida network were in Northern Alliance hands.

However, he deemed "credible" reports of the arrest by Northern Alliance forces of Ahmed Omar Abdel-Rahman, an al-Qaida operative and the son of Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Muslim cleric convicted in 1995 in a foiled plot to bomb several New York landmarks and whose followers were convicted in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

"I think it's probably fairly credible," he said, adding the administration did not have "final absolute confirmation."

Cheney said Rahman was the perfect example of a non-US terror suspect who would be tried in military courts, to be created in accordance with an executive order signed by Bush.

"Clearly a high-ranking al-Qaida official captured in Afghanistan, who's been involved in the organization, is exactly the kind of individual that the tribunals were established for," he said.

"We have to be very aggressive if we're going to intercept, if we're going to disrupt, if we're going to prevent future attacks against the United States," he added.

US forces largely focused their search for the extremists near Kandahar, where 800 Marines took over a base in the desert to the south of the city.

The Marines are backed by AH-1W Cobra helicopter gunships and were to be used to choke off Kandahar and block escape routes to Pakistan, Iran or Kabul, officials said.

Pentagon officials also said Thursday that US warships had mounted a maritime interdiction operation in the Arabian Sea to nab terror suspects attempting to flee the region.

And about 100 troops from the US 10th Mountain Division deployed at two locations in the north to conduct security operations, Stufflebeem said. ***AFP, AP***

Atong no VIP in '5-star' jail

(From page A1)

deals with Estrada, who is himself being held at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

The fugitive was arrested on Nov. 25 at the Paris Hotel here by Federal Bureau of Investigation and US Marshal agents, and was taken to the detention center the next day.

Extradition proceedings will not start until Feb. 28. And the process can drag on if Ang decides to put up a legal fight.

"If he fights it, it may take another month or two," said Greg Dewy, US Marshal supervisory deputy in Las Vegas.

Gayle Jacobs, FBI media representative here, said Ang was being "detained without prejudice."

That means "the defense can motion the court to reconsider the detention," Jacobs said, adding she did not know whether Ang's lawyers had done that yet.

Typical day

For Ang and the 600 other inmates, a typical day starts at 4:30 a.m. when they are given disposable razors and take a shower.

At 5:30 a.m. they are escorted to the hall where breakfast is served. "The menu is dietician-designed and -approved and consists of anything you can get from a restaurant," Lake said.

That includes coffee, juice, pancakes, eggs and sausages, and cereal.

The prisoners are not obliged to rush through breakfast. After the meal, they are given time for recreation and can watch television, read newspapers or play card games. "Then it's time for medication, and medical staff come in," Lake said.

By mid-morning, the prisoners have made a choice between playing basketball or simply conversing with one another to while the time away until lunch.

"Again, lunch consists of anything you can have at home: cookies, juice, sandwiches or what not," Lake said.

Then it is time again for recreation and medication, as well as unlimited access to telephones.

"They can go to the library if they signed up for the day, too," Lake said.

Dinner is ready around 4:30 p.m., and again, the hot meal can be anything from beef to franks to a spicy Mexican dish.

Afterward, "it's hygiene time and they can take their shower, or just straighten up their living area, fix their beds," Lake said.

It's lights out at midnight.

Weekends are allotted for watching the latest films on a wide screen. Visitation hours take up the evenings.

The inmates also have "commissary day" every Tuesday and Thursday. "Those who have money can buy their stuff on those days," Lake said.

DENNIS SABANGAN

THE PATIENT, former President Estrada, emerges from his eye check-up at the Asian Eye Institute in Rockwell Center, Makati City, on Friday.

Erap to have eye surgery to remove cataract, cyst

(From page A1)

"Very modern, very beautiful, they have the best equipment and the most modern," he said in Taglish.

Veloso is a specialist in comprehensive ophthalmology and retina and vitreous diseases.

The ousted leader arrived in a four-car convoy with police escorts. He was riding in a Lexus SUV with his wife, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito.

He was back at his Veterans Memorial Medical Center detention suite by 5 p.m.

In a phone interview from the VMMC, Estrada said he would be undergoing two separate procedures, one for the cataract and the cyst.

Each operation would last for 45 minutes, but the preparations would stretch the entire process to at least four hours.

Estrada did not comment when asked if the Sandiganbayan would again grant him permission to leave the VMMC for the operation.

Heavy guard

The AEI, located on the ninth and 10th floors of the Phinma Plaza building in the Rockwell complex, Makati City was itself under heavy guard with a joint team from the Southern Police District and the Makati City Police.

The graft court, which is hearing the plunder cases against Estrada, has yet to rule on his motion to be allowed to go to the US for treatment on his knee.

The AEI offers a whole range of services for eye care. It has 14 examination rooms and four operating rooms with state-of-the art equipment.

Its shareholders include the ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., the First Philippine Industrial Corp., Manila Electric Company and First Philippine Holdings Corp., all belonging to the Lopez Group of companies.

The Rockwell Center itself, formerly a Meralco power station, was developed by the Lopez Group.

Estrada's daughter, Jackie, is married to Beaver Lopez, a scion of the Lopez family.

George Harrison, the Quiet Beatle, is dead

(From page A1)

surviving Beatles, Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr. John Lennon was shot to death by a deranged fan in 1980.

It wasn't immediately known if there would be a public funeral for Harrison. A private ceremony had already taken place, De Becker said.

In 1998, Harrison disclosed that he had been treated for throat cancer. "It reminds you that anything can happen," he said at the time. The following year, Harrison survived an attack by an intruder who stabbed him several times. In July 2001, he released a statement asking fans not to worry about reports that he was still battling cancer.

The Beatles were four distinct personalities joined as a singular force in the rebellious 1960s, influencing everything from hair styles to music. Whether dropping acid, proclaiming "All You Need is Love" or sending up the squares in the film "A Hard Day's Night," the Beatles inspired millions.

George's guitar

Harrison's guitar work, modeled on Chuck Berry and Carl Perkins among others, was essential.

He often blended with the band's joyous sound, but also rocked out wildly on "Long Tall Sally" and turned slow and dreamy on "Something." His jangly 12-string Rickenbacker, featured in "A Hard Day's Night," was a major influence on the American band the Byrds.

Although his songwriting was overshadowed by the great Lennon-McCartney team, Harrison did contribute such classics as "Here Comes the Sun" and "Something," which Frank Sinatra recorded. Harrison also taught the young Lennon how to play the guitar.

"As he said himself, how do you compare with the genius of John and Paul? But he did, very well," rock star and activist Bob Geldof told BBC radio.

"All the way back, he measured up," Geldof said. "Maybe because of the necessary competition between the other two, his standard of songwriting was incomparably better than most other contemporaries anyway."

He was known as the "quiet" Beatle and his public image was summed up in the first song he wrote for them, "Don't Bother Me," which appeared on the group's second album.

Wry sense of humor

But Harrison also had a wry sense of humor that helped shape the Beatles' irreverent charm, memorably fitting in alongside Lennon's cutting wit and Starr's cartoonish appeal.

At their first recording session under George Martin, the producer reportedly asked the young musicians to tell him if they didn't like anything. Harrison's response: "Well, first of all, I don't like your tie." Asked by a reporter what he called the Beatles' famous moptop hairstyle, he quipped, "Arthur."

He was even funny about his own mortality. As reports of his failing health proliferated, Harrison recorded a new song—"Horse to the Water"—and credited it to "RIP Ltd. 2001."

He always preferred being a musician to being a star, and he soon soured on Beatlemania—the screaming girls, the hair-tearing mobs, the wild chases from limos to gigs and back to limos. Like Lennon, his memories of the Beatles were often tempered by what he felt was lost in all the madness.

"There was never anything, in any of the Beatle experiences really, that good: even the best thrill soon got tiring," Harrison wrote in his 1979 book, "I, Me, Mine." "There was never any doubt. The Beatles were doomed. Your own space, man, it's so important. That's why we were doomed, because we didn't have any. We were like monkeys in a zoo."

Still, in a 1992 interview with The Daily Telegraph, Harrison confided: "We had the time of our lives: We laughed for years."

After the Beatles broke up in 1970, Harrison had sporadic success. He organized the concert for Bangladesh in New York City, produced films that included Monty Python's "Life of Brian," and teamed with old friends, including Bob Dylan and Roy Orbison, as "The Traveling Wilburys."

His first guitar

George Harrison was born Feb. 25, 1943, in Liverpool, one of four children of Harold and Louise Harrison. His father, a former ship's steward, became a bus conductor soon after his marriage.

Harrison was 13 when he bought his first guitar and befriended Paul McCartney at their school. McCartney introduced him to Lennon, who had founded a band called the Quarry Men—Harrison was allowed to play if one of the regulars didn't show up.

"When I joined, he didn't really know how to play the guitar; he had a little guitar with three strings on it that looked like a banjo," Harrison recalled of Lennon during testimony in a 1998 court case against the owner of a bootleg Beatles' recording.

"I put the six strings on and showed him all the chords—it was actually me who got him playing the guitar. He didn't object to that, being taught by someone who was the baby of the group. John and I had a very good relationship from very early on."

Harrison evolved as both musician and songwriter. He became interested in the sitar while making the 1965 film "Help!" and introduced it to a generation of Western listeners on "Norwegian Wood," a song by Lennon from the "Rubber Soul" album. He also began contributing more of his own material.

Among his compositions were "I Need You" for the soundtrack of "Help"; "If I Needed Someone" on "Rubber Soul"; "Taxman" and "Love You To" on "Revolver"; "Within You, Without You" on "Sgt. Pepper"; and "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" on the White Album.

In 1966, he married model Patti Boyd, who had a bit part in "A Hard Day's Night." (They divorced in 1977, and she married Harrison's friend, the guitarist Eric Clapton, who wrote the anguished song "Layla" about her. Harrison attended the wedding.)

Craving for quiet

More than any of the Beatles, Harrison craved a little quiet. He found it in India. Late in 1966, after the Beatles had ceased touring, George and Patti went to India, where Harrison studied the sitar with Ravi Shankar. He maintained a lifelong affiliation with that part of the world.

In 1967, Harrison introduced the other Beatles to the teaching of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and all four took up transcendental meditation. Harrison was the only one who remained a follower—the others dropped out, with Lennon mocking the Maharishi in the song "Sexy Sadie."

By the late '60s, Harrison was clearly worn out from being a Beatle and openly bickered with McCartney, arguing with him on camera during the filming of "Let It Be."

As the Beatles grew apart, Harrison collaborated with Clapton on the song "Badge," performed with Lennon's Plastic Ono Band and produced his most acclaimed solo work, the triple album "All Things Must Pass." The sheer volume of material on that 1970 release confirmed the feelings of Harrison fans that he was being stifled in the Beatles.

But one of those songs, the hit "My Sweet Lord," later drew Harrison into a lawsuit: The copyright owner of "He's So Fine," written by Lonnie Mack and recorded by The Chiffons, won a claim that Harrison had stolen the music.

Legal problems

Another Harrison project also led to legal problems. Moved by the starvation caused by the war between Bangladesh and Pakistan, Harrison in 1971 staged two benefit concerts at Madison Square Garden and recruited such performers as Starr, Shankar, Clapton and Dylan.

Anticipating such later superstar benefits as Live Aid and Farm Aid, the Bangladesh concerts were also a cautionary tale about counterculture bookkeeping. Although millions were raised and the three-record concert release won a Grammy for album of the year, allegations emerged over mishandling of funds and the money long stayed in escrow.

Despite the occasional hit single, including the Lennon tribute song "All Those Years Ago," Harrison's solo career did not live up to initial expectations. Reviewing a greatest hits compilation, Village Voice critic Robert Christgau likened him to a "borderline hitter they can pitch around after the sluggers (Lennon and McCartney) are traded away."

Harrison's family life was steadier. He married Olivia Arias in 1978, a month after Dhani was born.

The next year, Harrison founded Handmade Films to produce Monty Python's "Life of Brian." He sold the company for $8.5 million in 1994.

Fame continued to haunt him. In 1999, he was stabbed several times by a man who broke into his home west of London. The man, who thought the Beatles were witches and believed himself on a divine mission to kill Harrison, was acquitted by reason of insanity. ***AP***

Misuari HQ a bomb factory, AFP finds out

(From page A1)

powder, a box of firecrackers, three 1-gallon bombs, 12 half-gallon bombs, 10 anti-tank mines, 40 10-meter pipe bombs, two boxes of improvised explosive devices, 45 4-inch pipe bombs, 10 improvised land mines, two rolls of electrical firing wire, a 30-liter container of improvised explosive devices, and five pocketbooks on bomb-making.

Also recovered were two M-16 rifles, three homemade M-79s, a .45-cal pistol, a .50-cal HMG, two Garand rifles, two carbines, an M-14 rifle, 18 rounds of 60 mm mortars, three hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, six rounds of cartridge 57 RR and 90 mm mortars.

Cimatu theorized that those behind the October bombing of the Zamboanga City Puericulture Center had links with the members of the Moro National Liberation Front residing in the Cabatangan Complex.

He said he would ask the Explosives and Ordnance Division (EOD) to determine whether there was a connection. "Probably there is," he added.

EOD chief Insp. Jose Bayani Gucela said a 1-kilo improvised bomb was used in the October bombing.

With that discovery, Cimatu now considers "terrorists" the MNLF forces loyal to Misuari. "These are the weapons of terrorism," he said.

He also said the seized explosives would be detonated as soon as the EOD had compared these with the bomb used in October.

Cimatu requested the National Bureau of Investigation to reopen the case of suspected bomber Marvin Geonson, who was earlier arrested as prime suspect in the Puericulture Center blast along with another suspect identified only as Jammal.

White doves

Yesterday, the military released two white doves as a symbol of recapturing the Cabatangan Complex.

"This is now the end of Misuari's stay," Cimatu said.

Zamboanga Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat said she planned to convert the Cabatangan Complex into the seat of the city government once the property had been acquired from the national government or from the ARMM.

Lobregat said the Southcom could temporarily occupy the place to ensure that MNLF forces would be barred entry.

She said she had also written President Macapagal-Arroyo about the city's plan to buy the complex.

Cimatu said he was also interested in converting the complex into an extension of the Southcom headquarters because of its strategic location.

But residents were still not allowed to enter the complex where bomb experts continued to search for land mines.

City Councilor Milabel Velasquez said some 15,000 people evacuated to nearby barangays at the height of the fighting between government forces and Misuari's loyalists.

A number returned to their homes only to discover that these had been hit by bombs.

Anova Sari said her house, which is about 2 kilometers away from the Cabatangan Complex, was destroyed by bombs dropped from OV-10 Bronco planes.

Velasquez said city officials were trying to find funds to help residents repair their houses.

Some residents of Barangays San Roque and Santa Maria claimed that soldiers had killed four MNLF fighters captured in a clearing operation.

Supt. Mario Yanga, city police chief, said seven MNLF fighters were arrested while trying to escape. Four of them were captured by members of the 57th Infantry Battalion. The three others are in the custody of the Zamboanga City Police Office.

Cimatu said he would look into the reported killings.

Four bodies were found in a ravine in San Roque on Wednesday night. The bodies bore cigarette burns, and their necks were all broken.

Unity

The MNLF Council of 15, which ousted Misuari as MNLF chair, yesterday called on his loyalists to join the group.

It announced that it would issue identification cards to help authorities determine the genuine MNLF members.

Maj. Gen. Abdul Sahrin, chief of the MNLF general staff intelligence service and chair of its joint monitoring committee, said diplomacy was important in forging unity.

"If we will not give the MNLF forces whom Misuari abandoned the chance to return to the mainstream of the MNLF, they will be left out to commit more atrocities, or worse, forge an alliance with the Abu Sayyaf," Sahrin said.

He said the MNLF Council of 15 did not want the Abu Sayyaf to get stronger, but wanted to give Misuari's men a chance to lead normal lives.

However, Sahrin said, if Misuari's loyalists decide to continue with their struggle, then the Council of 15 would have no recourse but to request the government to go after them.

In Cotabato City, Mayor Muslimin Sema, secretary general of the MNLF and a member of the Council of 15, said Misuari's loyalists "are our comrades-in-arms."

"If they want to be part of the new MNLF, they are free (to join us)," Sema said. "They are welcome provided they continue to uphold the 1996 peace agreement that the MNLF signed with the national government."

3 battalions

Cimatu said three battalions had started to mass around an MNLF camp in Zamboanga del Sur to prevent Misuari's loyalists from launching more attacks.

But he said his troops would not move without a go-signal from ARMM authorities.

"In the meantime, we will be waiting for the recommendations of the ARMM governor vis a vis the status of the MNLF men and their firearms," he said. "That would be the basis for probable legal action against them."

Cimatu said Misuari's loyalists had been put in the custody of the acting ARMM governor, Isnaji Alvarez, who would have to account for the firearms that were considered ARMM property.

He said Alvarez would be sent to the MNLF camp in Panubigan, Zamboanga del Sur, to confer with the fighters led by Misuari nephew Julhambrie Misuari.

With reports from Charlie C. Señase and Hernan P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Martin P. Marfil, Juliet L. Javellana and Rocky Nazareno in Manila

7TH NATIONAL PREX CONVENTION 2002

(PARISH RENEWAL EXPERIENCE)
JANUARY 4-6, 2002
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Good Shepherd Archdiocesan Shrine & Parish
Fairview Park, Quezon City

Theme:
"The Call to Morality"

" Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand " Mt. 4:17

The Blue Christ, Acrylic on Canvass
By: Araceli Limcaco Dans
Good Friday, 2000

O, Most Glorious and Blessed Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are now in the midst of preparations for our 7th National PREX Convention to be held on January 4-6, 2002 in Baguio City.

Lord, more than ever, outpour on us Your blessings, guidance, and protection. Through Your divine assistance and will, about 800 parishes nationwide are now conducting regular PREX seminars. Dear Father, we pray that more parishes in the country will join and heed Your call so as to assure the salvation of our broken Fatherland and most especially to proclaim Your greater glory and honor. Inflame the love we have for You and instill in our hearts that "Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom..." (Pro.9:10).

To You, we dedicate our Convention theme, "THE CALL TO MORALITY" based on "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is close at hand." (Mt. 4:17) to remind us that life is short and temporary but when our day comes, we shall rejoice with You in Your heavenly kingdom. AMEN.

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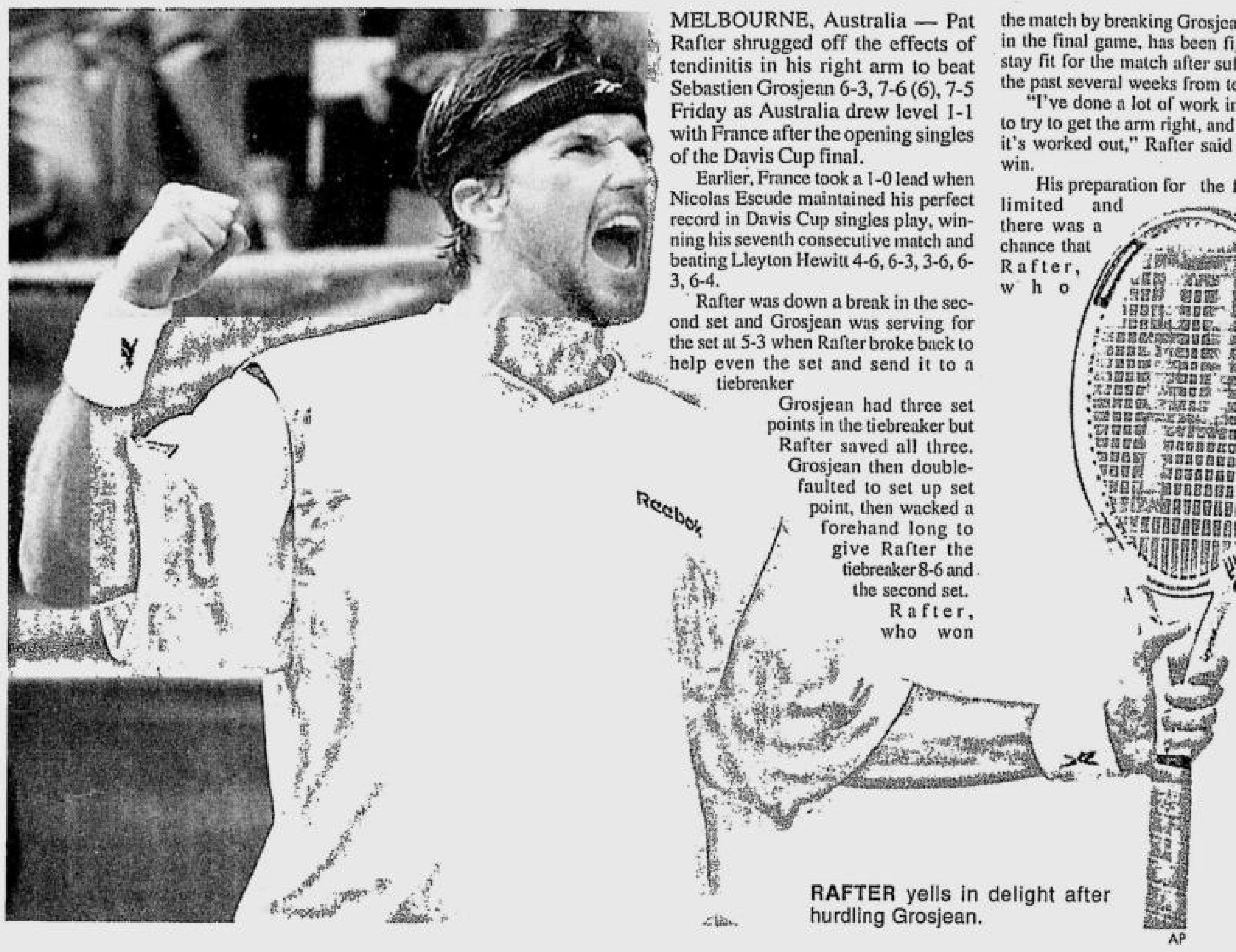
Rafter outplays Grosjean as Australia ties France, 1-1



RAFTER yells in delight after hurdling Grosjean. AP

ESCUDE: Perfect record. AP

MELBOURNE, Australia — Pat Rafter shrugged off the effects of tendinitis in his right arm to beat Sebastien Grosjean 6-3, 7-6 (6), 7-5 Friday as Australia drew level 1-1 with France after the opening singles of the Davis Cup final.

Earlier, France took a 1-0 lead when Nicolas Escude maintained his perfect record in Davis Cup singles play, winning his seventh consecutive match and beating Lleyton Hewitt 4-6, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Rafter was down a break in the second set and Grosjean was serving for the set at 5-3 when Rafter broke back to help even the set and send it to a tiebreaker

Grosjean had three set points in the tiebreaker but Rafter saved all three. Grosjean then double-faulted to set up set point, then wacked a forehand long to give Rafter the tiebreaker 8-6 and the second set.

Rafter, who won the match by breaking Grosjean's serve in the final game, has been fighting to stay fit for the match after suffering in the past several weeks from tendinitis.

"I've done a lot of work in training to try to get the arm right, and I'm glad it's worked out," Rafter said after the win.

His preparation for the final was limited and there was a chance that Rafter, who plans to take an extended break from tennis next year, would have to be scratched from the Australian team.

Earlier, Escude broke Hewitt in the eighth games of the second and fourth sets, then held his serve in the pivotal eighth game of the deciding set after Hewitt held three break points.

Hewitt was only able to convert three of his 18 breakpoint chances in the match while Escude took advantage of four of eight.

"I felt the match start to go my way in the fourth, and the key was holding my serve when it seemed as if Lleyton would come back in the fifth," said Escude.

Hewitt said he missed too many chances.

"The biggest key would have been to take my opportunities when they came," said Hewitt. "I had an awful lot and just couldn't take them. He came up with the big serves consistently."

The win was Escude's second in a row over Hewitt after beating the Australian in five sets in the fourth round at Wimbledon, with the deciding set score also 6-4. It was Hewitt's first match since becoming the world's top-ranked player following the Masters Cup in Sydney two weeks ago.

The win by the 27th-ranked Escude also helped stem a Hewitt hot streak that had seen the 20-year-old Australian win 22 of his last 24 matches.

On Saturday, Wayne Arthurs and Todd Woodbridge were scheduled to lead Australia in doubles against Cedric Pioline and Fabrice Santoro, but changes can be made to the doubles lineup up to an hour before the match.

Hewitt got off to a fast start in the opening set, winning 12 points in a row after the first game, including breaking Escude in the third game, and taking five of his six games in the first set at love over an ineffective Escude.

In the second set, Escude started serving stronger and some of Hewitt's shots that went for winners in the first set were wide or long, quieting the 15,459 capacity crowd at Rod Laver Arena that included Australian Prime Minister John Howard.

Escude, urged on by a chanting group of about 50 Frenchmen led by a bongo drum-playing fan and another with a megaphone, took advantage of his first breakpoint opportunity in the match to break Hewitt to go up 5-3 in the second set.

Serving for the set in the next game, Escude briefly had a scare when he slipped on the portable grass court near the net, skinning his right arm below the elbow. After a short break to clean the wound with a towel, he came back to hold serve and level the match.

Hewitt won the third after breaking Escude in the sixth game, but Escude came back in the fourth set, again breaking Hewitt in the eighth game - on only his third breakpoint opportunity of the match. *AP*

Uzbek netter reaches Tru-flex semifinal

FIFTH seed Dmitri Tomashevich of Uzbekistan bounced back from a first-set loss to prevail and earn a semifinal berth in the US$15,000 Tru-flex ITF Philippines Men's Futures 1 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The 27-year-old Davis Cupper downed James Auckland of Great Britain, 6-7 (6), 6-4, 6-3, to advance against qualifier Kim Dong-Hyun of Korea.

Kim capitalized on his big serve and powerful backhand to eliminate No. 8 Rik de voest of South Africa, 6-4, 6-3.

"I lost the first set but it was close. He played well," said Tomashevich, who has been with the Davis Cup team for the past 10 years. "I just made a good return on his serve and was patient to win the match."

Tomashevich, who first joined the tournament in 1997, expects a tough match against Kim, winner of the Chinese Taipei Futures in June.

"I think I have a 50-50 chance because Kim is a very good player," said the world's No. 311 Tomashevich.

Ninth seed Daniel Andersson of Sweden and qualifier Robert Krause of South Africa also earned Final Four slots in this event supported by the ITF Grand Slam Development Fund, PSC, Viva Mineral Water, Manila Midtown Hotel and official ball Wilson.

The world's No. 384 Andersson won after Lior Dahan of Israel retired due to fatigue in the second set. The score was 6-3, 3-1.

Krause, who ousted No. 6 Juraj Hasko in the quarterfinals, scored a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Roman Kukal of Slovak Republic.

Meanwhile, the qualifying for the second leg starts today at 9 a.m. while sign-in for the doubles will be on Monday.

Tuason Cup unfolds in Carmona

TOP karters dispute the prizes and the titles at stake as the 2nd Arthur Tuason Memorial Karting kicks off today at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

More than 60 karters have confirmed their participation in this event organized by the Tuason Racing Team and presented by the Standard Insurance and Magic 89.9 in cooperation with Hanjin Shipping, Carmona Circuit Philippines, Kart Plaza, Demvells Enterprises, Metro Makati Motors Association Inc., Trapik.com, Henry's Restaurant, Pika and Rallye Magwheels.

The Novice division has the biggest field of 38 karters battling for position and the P30,000 grand prize in the 1.2 km Track. Among the title favorites are Mike Casimiro, Justin Neri, Cadet champion Ken Monzones, lone girl entry Michelle Bumgarner and Team Cebu bet Mateo Gudecelli.

A more intense action is expected in the highly competitive Expert class where the country's best karters led by Manuel Sy, Jinky Cabalinan, Tyson Sy, Dado Pena and former Karter of the Year Pepon Marave slug it out for the crown.

Upcoming young talents eight to 13 years old will strut their wares in Cadet class and among the kids to watch in this division are Marty Aguilar and Mark Bumgarner.

The said event is an annual race in tribute to car racing legend Arthur Tuason—a prominent racing figure since the '70s here and abroad reached the height of fame after bagging 1972 Rally Driver of the Year aboard his famous Ford RS2000.

He died of leukemia in 1996, the main reason why JP Tuason got the Leukemic indigent Fund Endowment or LIFE as the main beneficiary of the race proceeds.

Rotary derby gets going tonight

A FIGHT-TO-FINISH 5-cock derby, to be hosted by the Rotary Club of New Manila (Quezon City), gets going at the Mandaluyong Coliseum beginning at 7 p.m. More than 58 fights are lined up.

Backing up the event is well-known sportsman Raymond Velayo, himself a dedicated rotarian and a founding member of the United Cockers Association of the Philippines (Ucap).

Paying patrons who bought tickets in either of the four Mandaluyong derbies, namely, Rotary 5-Cock Derby (Dec. 1), Berong Javellana 4-Cock Derby (Dec. 8), Sagupaan Altuz 7-Cock Derby (Dec. 11 and 13) and 4-Cock Vendors Derby (Dec. 18) are automatically qualified in a raffle draw on Dec. 18.

Two lucky winners will be chosen, who stand to win two round-trip tickets each to Cebu plus two nights hotel accommodation at Waterfront Hotel and P10,000 pocket money. The winners' name will be published in the newspapers. For other inquiries, please contact 534-4110, 531-4003, 531-4005 and 535-2341.

Pinoy karatekas compete abroad

TWO Philippine karatedo teams will see action in the World Goju kai Karatedo Championships in Perth, Australia and in the Asia Pacific Shitoryu Championships in Singapore this weekend, according to the Association for the Advancement of Karatedo (AAK).

Among the 22 athletes competing are recent National Open—70kg kumite champion Joel Malillin, National Open kata champion Stephanie Carol Lim and former SEA Games medalist Kristina de Jesus Laforteza.

Daryl Ray Dumayas, Vincent Pante, Mark Anthony Teneza, Norman Montalvo, Raissa Velasquez, Muriel Farinas and Samantha Lexie Saldajeno will also participate in the juniors kumite and kata events.

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Oklahoma Sooners vs Arkansas Razorbacks at 9 a.m. on ESPN

NBA Inside Stuff at 10:30 a.m. (r—10:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA -Milwaukee Bucks vs Portland Trailblazers at 11 a.m. (r – 8:30 p.m.) on Star Sports and Miami Heat vs Chicago Bulls at 2:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Yearbook - 2000 Buffalo Bills at 1 p.m. (r) on ESPN

NFL - Philadelphia Eagles vs Kansas City Chiefs at 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

GOLF: US Open Official Films - 1989 at 11 a.m. (r) on ESPN

TENNIS: ATP Tennis Show at 2 p.m. on ESPN

BILLIARDS: 2001 WPBA Classic Tour, Finals at 12 noon (r – 9 p.m.) on ESPN

2001 International Challenge of Champions, Semifinal #1 at 8 p.m. (r) on ESPN

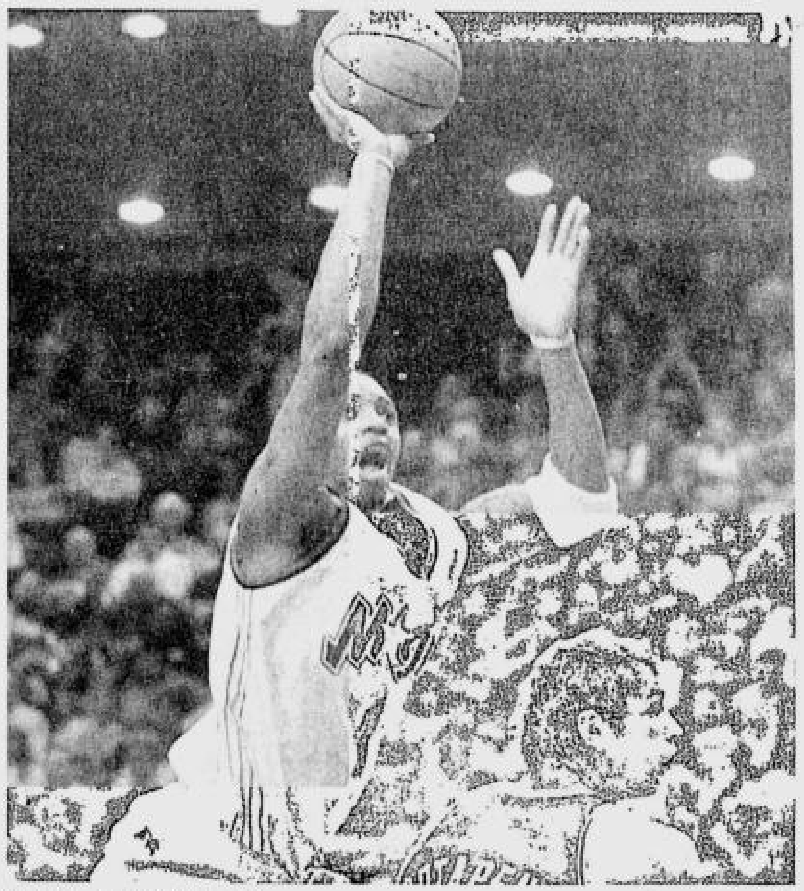
BOWLING: Professional Women's Bowling Association at 8 a.m. (r) on ESPN

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1988, Rogelio Barcenilla Jr. beat GM Ivan Sokolov in 53 moves of a Ruy Lopez to lift the Philippines to a seventh place finish at the 28th chess Olympiad in Thessaloniki, Greece. Also today in 1991, Lydia de Vega-Mercado clocked 11.44 seconds to regain her 100-m crown in the XVI Manila Southeast Asian Games at the Rizal Memorial Stadium.

TRUCK CHALLENGE

Noel Bartolome, the first Filipino Off Roader to compete in an international race in Malaysia, is shown driving his truck named "Macarena" which he will use in the 1st Philippine Tough Truck Challenge that reeled off yesterday at the Fort Bonifacio, Global City. Bartolome, a protege of Caltex-Delo, is one of the favorites in the event presented by Red Horse Beer and sponsored by Caltex-Delo, Tide, RIDE, 199 Off Road House and Premiere Ready Mix.



NBA ACTION AP

Orlando Magic guard McGrady (left) shoots and draws a foul from Boston Celtics center Vitaly Potapenko during the second period of their NBA game at the TD Waterhouse Centre in Orlando, Florida, Thursday night. The Celtics triumphed, 99-89. Other results: Toronto 91, Memphis 88; Atlanta 105, Cleveland 96; Chicago 78, Miami 72; Sacramento 110, Dallas 98.

RP riders joining Asia tilt

FIVE-TIME national motocross champion Glen Aguilar and Kenneth "Wonder Boy" San Andres of Caltex-KTM Racing Team were chosen to represent the country in the 2001 FIM (Federation Internationale de Motorcycliste) Asia Supercross Championship scheduled Dec. 2 at the Thailand International Circuit.

The National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa), the country's highest governing body in motocross, said Aguilar and San Andres earned the right to represent the country by virtue of their "exemplary skills and excellence in all Namssa-sanctioned events held this year."

Aguilar will see action in the pro category against the region's best riders while San Andres will vie in the Little Stars class against top junior riders.

Macky Carapiet, the FIM UAM Motocross and Enduro Commission president and project director of the 2001-2002 FIM Asia Supercross Championship, will accompany Aguilar and San Andres in the season-ending event in Thailand.

Aguilar is currently fifth overall in the points standing out of 65 entries in the five-part series, which was also earlier held in Japan, Indonesia, China and Malaysia. The current frontrunners are Japanese, Thailand and Indonesian rulers.

"We expect a bigger and better 2002 FIM Asia Supercross Championship next year when there will be a total of nine rounds. We have added the Philippines, Macau, Australia and India in the 2002 season avenue," said Carapiet, the first Filipino to be elected to the position.

Namssa president Ken Falco said both Aguilar and San Andres are expected to fare well in the prestigious series.

New Era cagers rip Aguinaldo

GAMES TODAY (PMI Gym)
8 a.m.—New Era vs DLSU-M (women's)
9:30 a.m.—RTU vs PMI (women's)
11 a.m.—PUP vs SBC (women's)
12:30 p.m.—RTU vs EAC (junior's)
3:30 p.m.—SBC vs Olivarez (junior's)
5 p.m.—PMI vs PSBA (seniors)

NEW Era University's juniors squad leaned on its top three players to blast Emilio Aguinaldo College, 81-37, yesterday in the National Capital Region Athletic Association basketball competitions at the Philippine Maritime Institute gym.

John Carlo Andal fired a game-high 21 points while Mark Simon and Tonio Deninia tallied 14 and 10, respectively, for New Era, which finally posted its very first win after two consecutive losses in this tournament supported by Pagcor, Pepsi-Cola, Splash, Mikasa and the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Blu 5 battles ICTSI

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
2 p.m.—Blu Detergent vs ICTSI Archers
4 p.m.—Kutitap Toothpaste vs Ateneo

BY DENNIS U. EROA

PACESETTER Blu Detergent aims to end its first round campaign on a torrid note as it tackles dangerous International Container Terminal Services Inc.-Archers today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

A victory by the Detergent Kings over the surprising and exuberant Archers in their 2 p.m. encounter will fortify their hold of the leadership in the eight-team field. Blu sports a 5-1 slate.

Kutitap Toothpaste (3-3) battles Ateneo-Pioneer in the second game at 4 p.m. Spicing up the match is how will former Ateneo standout Wesley Gonzales, now a main Kutitap player, fare against his college and high school teammates.

Still looking for its first title in three years, Blu is looking good under rookie mentor Tony de la Cerna. Its latest victim was Ateneo-Pioneer, 85-78, last Thursday.

De la Cerna, who replaced veteran Nat Canson, believes the Archers are going to give his charges a difficult time. "Remember they've beaten Welcoat in double overtime. I expect the Archers to go all-out anew."

Edwin Bacani and Egay Billones are shooting well for the Kings but their true strength lies in their ability to limit their turnovers and play good defense.

Hardly given a chance at the start of the tournament, coach Franz Pumaren's charges, thanks to their zest, occupy second position with a 4-1 card.

"The win over Welcoat was a test of character," said Pumaren. "Blu is another tough foe."

Mike Cortez, Rommel Daep, Adonis Sta. Maria, Alvin Castro, Muggsy Magsumbol and Bernzon Franco banner ICTSI's bid.

LINA TAKES GMA'S PLACE

Batang Pinoy blasts off today

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BACOLOD CITY—With President Arroyo canceling her appearance in the last minute, the 3rd Philippine National Youth Games-Batang Pinoy unfolds today with some 4,000 12-year-olds and younger from around the country seeing action at the Panaad Sports Complex here.

Interior and Local Secretary Joey Lina will take her place as guest of honor in the 2 p.m. opening rite as the Chief Executive reportedly begged off from all her commitments for the weekend to monitor the peace and order situation in Mindanao.

With a reduced budget and concerns over age eligibility issues, the Philippine Sports Commission pushes through with the annual event which aims to discover the country's future sports superstars. Kicking off the Games are events in boxing, chess, football, baseball, softball, tennis and volleyball.

PSC commissioners Weena Lim and Richie Garcia vowed to enforce stricter measures against age-cheating which hounded the past two staging of the event.

Lim said they put up a special "appeals" committee which will determine protests over age eligibility. If one athlete is found violating the 12-under rule, the whole team which he or she is affiliated will be disqualified. Another violation by the same city or province will disqualify the entire delegation, according to Lim.

LIM

Resurrected Ruby

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

RUBY Chico, the almost forgotten golf heroine, has bounced back. She had just won a seat to the Futures Tour of America, a yearlong event featuring the world's dreamers of big time women's golf. She became the first Filipina to achieve that feat.

"It feels great," Ruby told me on the phone yesterday. "Exciting. This is a new life for me. I never felt so good in my whole life."

There were 276 in the field, coming from all corners of the globe. The four-day tournament was held at Lakelands, between Orlando and Tampa in Florida. Only the Top 28 were qualified for the Futures Tour, a jumping board to the U.S. LPGA. Ruby finished 14th.

"I must admit I had reservations before I joined the event," said Ruby. "But when I finally I had to do it, I told myself, 'I should do it now, or there's never tomorrow for me.' I think I did it because I was willing to give it my one last shot."

Ruby was the first gold medal winner for the Philippines in SEA Games women's golf in 1987. Since then, she was a consistent player for the national team. Then she got married—to George Walker, a teaching professional from England. They had a child—Stephanie, now four years old.

"My family sidelined my career somewhat," said Ruby. "And I thought that was it for my career."

Then she tried out for the national team again. Easily, she earned a slot to the RP Team that competed in the last SEA Games in Kuala Lumpur in September. She didn't play her usual game, though. The old fire had been snuffed somewhat by martial bliss. But then, the opportunity to play for flag and country rekindled that dying spirit, touched a nerve in the heart, awakened a warrior's pump from a long slumber.

"I was born a golfer," said Ruby. "I knew I had to do something to get back to where I belong—and that is golf."

Immediately after the Kuala Lumpur Games, Ruby embarked on her mission to active duty. She ran miles daily. Played rounds daily. Did gym work daily. Then, she packed her bags and golf equipment and, accompanied by her bosom friend, Aileen Chua, they flew to America. In a manner of speaking, Aileen caddied her to victory.

"I must say Aileen did a lot of wonders for me," said Ruby. "Her perseverance helped me pull through during the most trying moments of the competition."

Aileen, herself a single digit golfer, also doubles as a physical therapist and nutritionist. "And, of course, I must commend the National Golf Association of the Philippines for not having lost faith in me," said Ruby. "For including me in the team to KL, the NGAP helped restart my golf career."

Ruby saved the best words for her hubby, George.

"Without George, I would not have made it to the Futures Tour," said Ruby. "His guiding hands, his words of wisdom literally carried me through."

Said George: "Everything that she's achieved thus far, it's to her credit. I can tell her the sweetest things about golf, teach her all the finest points of the game, but if she never listens at all, all is meaningless."

The Futures Tour will start in March. The Top 3 in money winnings after no less than 20 legs will automatically advance to the LPGA. The fourth to 10th placers will move to the final qualifying stage for the 2003 LPGA season.

"My next move now is to condition more both body and mind," said Ruby. "The cardio-vascular aspect of my body is paramount. My stomach needs firming. I have talked to a sports psychologist in America and he's been very cooperative. With everybody helping and with your prayers backing me up, there's no reason why I couldn't move on and soon achieve that dream—the LPGA dream."

Ruby is only 31. For her, there's still a whole, wide world out there for the taking. Look, Greg Norman is pushing 50; only last week, he earned $1million for winning the "Skins Game."

Anand enters 3rd round

MOSCOW—Defending Fide world champion Viswanathan Anand of India advanced to the third round of the Fide world championship Friday with a draw against Denmark's Peter Heine Nielsen in the second game of the round.

Anand, playing white, achieved an advantage in space and a better pawn structure in a double-rook-and-pawn ending. But rather than try to squeeze a win out of the position, he accepted a draw since, after yesterday's thrashing of Nielsen, this was all he needed to advance.

In the first game of the first round, the number one seeded Anand shocked everyone by losing with white to the bottom-seeded Olivier Touzane of France. But he came back to crush Touzane with black in the second game and win the playoff, and advance to the second round. The tournament is organized as a series of two-game elimination matches, with rapid and blitz playoffs in the case of ties. *AP*

Turbo finals

THE FINAL rounds of the MP Turbo Speedfest 2001 will feature the very exciting sport of Motocross in Subic starting today as part of its pioneering multi-sport format series.

An intermediate and beginners' kart clinic will also be held tomorrow in preparation for next year's racing season.

Speedfest 2001 is held in cooperation with the SBMA under the auspices of the honorable chair Felicito Payumo.

The all-in-one motorsport event is sponsored by zed, Gulf Oil, BLTBCo, Gatorade, Daye Motorcycles, Timex Watches, Gandour Candies, Universal Motors Corp., Mitsubishi Motors/Carworld Olongapo, Francisco Motors Corp., SMA Fuels Inc., Pepsi, the Subic LeMans Kart Track & the Subic International Raceway.

Baguio ready for Fil-Am meet

EACH year for the past 51 years, Baguio City has kicked off the Yuletide Season with the staging of the historic and prestigious Fil-Am Men's International Golf Tournament, the world's largest amateur golf event according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

And this year, from Dec. 3 to 8, the challenging and scenic golf courses of Camp John Hay and Baguio Country Club will host the 52nd edition of the Fil-Am Golf Tournament in a week of fellowship and competition aimed to foster international harmony and goodwill.

It began in 1949 when then CJH commander Major Archie Black joined head and hands with movie star Rogelio dela Rosa and the base's civil engineer Tucker West to conceive the annual Fil-Am. It was specifically established to provide an opportunity for men to bridge the cultural differences by an equalizing round of golf.

CJH was the sole venue of this annual meet until 1957 when BCC joined in. This allowed further expansion in the capability to fit the ever-increasing number of participants.

Six hundred-twenty players representing 124 local and foreign teams will compete in the 72-hole golf tilt sponsored by Smart-Sony Ericsson, College Assurance Plan, John Hay Poro Point Development and EVA Air.

Six playing days and three practice round will elicit joviality from successful accomplishments: This is all part of the uniqueness of participating by fellow golfers in the CJH and BCC's heaven-kissing courses.

The team captains' meeting and opening cocktails will be held today, the first of many activities lined up for the Fil-Am Tournament.

Elena golfers target double

JINGY Tuason spearheads Sta. Elena's title-retention campaign while Francis Gaston and Iggy Clavecilla are out to help Luisita reclaim the crown when the seventh staging of The Tradition is held on Dec. 4, 6 and 7 in three different courses.

Tuason will have a well-balanced crew to back him up including Dickie Dizon and Herbert Chan as they go up against nine other teams in tournament where nothing is at stake but club and individual pride.

While Luisita looks formidable with Gaston and Clavecilla, Canlubang also is fielding a strong contingent built around Rolly Viray, Mari Hechanova, Luigi Yulo and Abe Rosal.

Action fires off on Dec. 4 with the first round set to be played at Eastridge in Binangonan, Rizal. Canlubang and Sta. Elena, will host the second and third rounds on Dec. 6 and 7, respectively.

Tipped to also contend for the crown are Southwoods which will parade a team led by Bong Brobio, Lito Abierra, Marty Ilagan and Larry Tojino; Wack Wack which has a powerhouse seniors team and Alabang which is led by Luigi Tabuena and Caloy Coscolluela.

Each team is allowed a maximum of 16 players with four each to play in Group I, Group II, Group III and seniors with the best three scores counting.

Boosting Luisita's stock is its senior crew made up of Allan Gaston, Carlo Gamban and Alex Montelibano.

Miñoza behind by 4 shots

TOKYO—Up-and-coming Keiichiro Fukabori fired a six-under-par 64 Friday to grab a two-stroke second-round lead in the 90 million yen ($732,000) JGTO Nippon Series JT Cup golf tournament.

Fukabori, 32, carded seven birdies against one bogey on the 6,958-yard, par-70 Tokyo Yomiuri Country Club course en route to a 36-hole total of 9-under 131.

Takenori Hiraishi also had a 64 and stood two strokes back at 7-under 133, followed by an overnight leader Toru Taniguchi and Frankie Miñoza of the Philippines who were 135. Taniguchi had a 71 and Miñoza a 64.

Fiji's Dinesh Chand shot a 72 to join four Japanese at a par-140, and David Smail of New Zealand sank to three-way 19th after hitting a 71 for the second day in a row. *AFP*

Els up

SUN CITY, South Africa— Defending champion Ernie Els of South Africa took the first-round lead with a five-under-par 67 as the 21st Sun City Golf Challenge got underway on wet and muddy Gary Player Country Club course Thursday.

With the players in the invitation 12-man competition chasing a first prize of $2 million, the richest in golf, and soaking rain falling for most of the day, Els carded six birdies with nine-hole loops of 33 and 34. *AFP*

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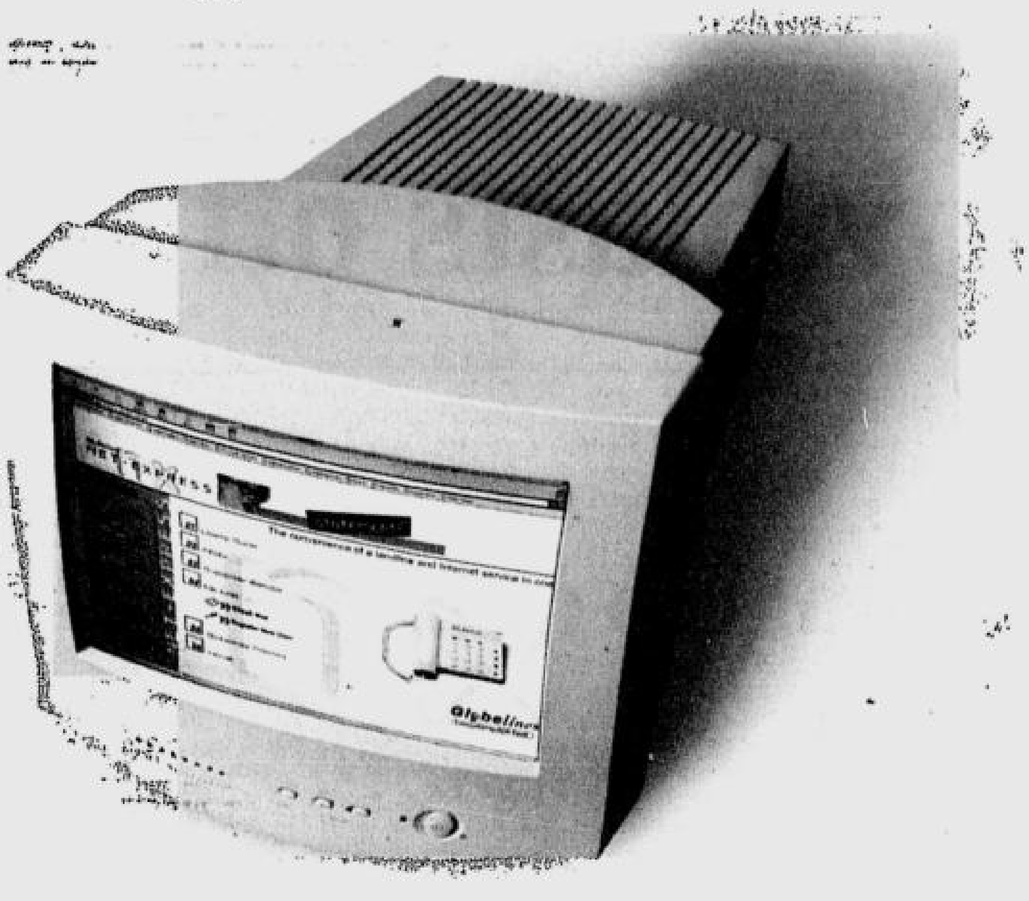

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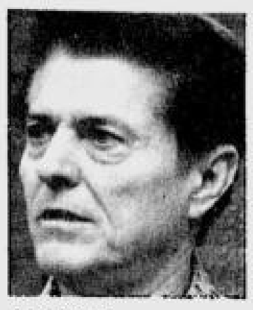
SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor
EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Ron bats for return to basics

BY JUNE NAVARRO

GAME TOMORROW
(Araneta Coliseum)
6p.m.—Pop Cola vs Sta. Lucia



JACOBS

BACK to basics.

Asian Games head coach Ron Jacobs said he would begin the training program of the PBA-spiked national team with the fundamentals of amateur basketball before concentrating on the strengths and weaknesses of the enemy.

By fundamentals, Jacobs meant that the team would have to go back to the basics of the sport—dribbling, shooting, passing—incorporated into drills designed to enhance the skills of the cagers.

"After the fundamentals, we will then move to defense, offense and special situations that call for a lot of brainpower," said Jacobs, who sits as consultant for San Miguel Beer and Barangay Ginebra in the PBA.

Special situations involve loads of basketball intuition like determining the right time when to attack the basket and spending the shotclock wisely, Jacobs added.

He also said the coaching staff would have to work doubly hard on scouting, stressing that they will send people to spy on the maneuvers of the enemy.

"We're gonna send people to the Chinese league, watch tapes and use our network to enhance our knowledge of the opposition," said the 58-year-old Jacobs.

He said China and Lebanon would compete in the World Basketball Championships next year before the Asiad in September to be held in Pusan, South Korea.

Realtors force rubber match

Meanwhile, Sta. Lucia Realty broke through Pop Cola's defensive juggernaut and played as one cohesive unit to register a 97-80 win last night and force a rubber match in the PBA Governors Cup at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City.

Damien Owens, Chris Tan and Paolo Mendoza sparkled as the Realtors leveled their best-of-five semifinal series against the Panthers at 2-2.

"For us to win, Damien has to play better. He's been a leader and his leadership will bring us to the championship," said Sta. Lucia Realty coach Norman Black.

Although scoring only 21 points, Owens made his teammates look good as he led four Realtors in double figures.

Batangas nears title

GAMES TOMORROW
Cebu City Coliseum
3 p.m.—Negros vs Cebuana Lhuillier
San Juan Gym
5:30 p.m.—LBC Batangas vs Andok's San Juan

LAURE

THE LBC Batangas Blades were sharp; the Andok's San Juan Knights were off-form. Predictably the Blades won.

LBC Batangas routed Andok's San Juan, 90-66, yesterday to move within a win of clinching the Northern Conference crown in the MBA Second Phase at the San Juan Gym.

The Blades, employing a tireless defense, thwarted the Knights' final rally behind a 10-point cluster to take an imposing 2-0 lead in the best-of-five series.

So lopsided was the game that the Knights fans began trooping to the exits with still 4 minutes and 5 seconds to go, the Blades ahead, 90-66.

The runaway victory was unexpected as Game One ended at 85-76 despite being played at the Blades' homecourt—La Salle Lipa Sentrum.

Now, the Knights face the tough task of sweeping the last three games starting with Game Three tomorrow to be able to defend their national title.

With their outside gunners firing bricks, the Knights trailed most part of the game and it was a credit to their resilience that they were able to come to within six points.

Alex Compton and Tonyboy Espinosa, however, knocked in a triple each to restore order at 68-55 and push the Blades closer to their first ever finals appearance.

Espinosa, sharing backcourt duties with Chuchu Serrano, wound up with 16 points, 5 assists, 4 rebounds and 2 steals to earn best player honors.

A fight nearly occurred between Batangas' Ralph Rivera and San Juan's Danny Capobres late in the second quarter and the Blades on top, 40-32, after they went for the rebound. Rivera was thrown out for a punching foul.

Negros exacted revenge over Cebuana Lhuillier, 103-88, in the other game at the USLS Gym in Bacolod City to level their Southern Conference title series at 1-1. The Gems stun the Slashers, 88-86, in the opener Wednesday night. *Roy Luarca*

Scores:

LBC BATANGAS 90—Laure 19, Sanders 16, Espinosa 16, Compton 13, Serrano 9, Corbin 4, Martin 4, Rivera 3, Adducul 3, Ramirez 3, Cuevas 0.

ANDOK'S SAN JUAN 66—Reavis 22, Calaguio 16, Dacia 7, Capobres 6, Victolero 6, Castillo 4, Otto 2, Banares 2, Rodriguez 1, Newton 0.

Quarters: 30-23, 47-34, 62-53, 90-66.

■ **Peace returns to Nida's neighborhood** A27
■ **Illegal connections could have sparked Munti blaze, says NBP** A27

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Militants hail Revilla

Senator backs labor call for P3,000 raise

BY AGNES E. DONATO

SEN. Ramon Revilla has earned the praise of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno group for filing a bill to grant government workers P3,000 in across-the-board salary increase.

"It is a good thing there are still legislators who still make the efforts to improve the state of workers in the country," said KMU spokesperson Sammy Malunes. "Senator Revilla's move would help in the workers' struggle for wage increase."

Revilla earlier filed Senate Bill No. 1881 seeking to legislate a salary increase of P3,000 for employees in the public sector.

Malunes claimed government could actually afford to raise the salaries of its employees, but has not been able to do so because of its failure to set its priorities straight.

"What the administration needs to do is to reassess its priorities in allocating the national budget," Malunes said.

The labor leader urged government to allocate a smaller budget for the military and foreign debt servicing and give more to agencies which deliver basic services to the people.

Malunes also asked Revilla to encourage his fellow lawmakers to support the bill and pass it immediately.

"It looks like President Macapagal is not at all interested in giving any form of assistance to the workers and the poor," he said.

MILITANTS/ A26

REVILLA

LEDESMA

New resto to rise in the garden of Kuh

BY LEAH SALTERIO

TWO fires are not enough to stop Kuh Ledesma from opening another dining and entertainment place.

NEW RESTO/ A26

Carlson to be buried in Fariñas mausoleum

BY CRISTINA ARZADON,
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAOAG CITY—Former beauty queen and actress Maria Teresa Carlson will be buried today in a 200-meter square mausoleum in a burial plot owned by the Fariñas clan in the Laoag Floral Garden here.

Former Laoag bishop Archbishop Edmundo Abaya will celebrate the Mass scheduled at 2 p.m. at the St. Williams Cathedral.

CARLSON/ A26

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Cinco murder suspect charged

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) charged with illegal possession of firearms the arrested suspect in the killing of former Commission on Elections director Velma Cinco.

The other man arrested on Thursday was released after he turned out to be just a companion of the suspect, a source said.

Conrado Robles, 47, of Barangay Malakimpok, San Pascual, Batangas, was charged before the Department of Justice Thursday night after he was allegedly caught with an unlicensed .32 caliber handgun, an NBI source said yesterday.

But Robles claimed that a military man provided him with the documents for the handgun. Task Force C-5, the joint NBI-police unit investigating Cinco's death, is hunting down an alleged former soldier.

Robles was allegedly a former casual employee at the Comelec. When Cinco took over the Comelec Education and Information Department, Robles allegedly lost his job.

Besides the quarrel between Cinco and her predecessor Angelina Matibag, the police are looking at the possibility that the Comelec director was killed because many casual employees were not rehired when Cinco became Comelec EID chief.

Investigators are still trying to find out if he was one of the two gunmen or just a mere lookout in Cinco's killing. Robles would have to be released soon if the authorities do not find enough evidence to pin him to Cinco's death.

Illegal possession of firearms is a bailable offense. The NBI earlier nabbed Matibag's security aide, Laverne Mark Manzano, also for illegal possession of firearms. But Manzano was released when he was able to present the proper documents of his handgun.

Cinco was ambushed on November 20 at the corner of Pedro Gil and Eden streets in Sta. Ana, Manila while she was on her way to work on her red Kia Pride (with plate number TDR 779) with her son Carlo and sister Marian S. Jayme.

Cinco, 62, died due to the four gunshot wounds in her head and body. Carlo was hit in his right shoulder while Jayme was unhurt.

Aside from trying to track down Robles and the ex-soldier, task force members are still looking for three other suspects in Cinco's murder.

Dad encourages city residents to bear arms

By Jerome Aning

ALARMED by what he described as the deterioration of the peace and order situation in Manila, a city councilor has proposed that residents should be encouraged to carry firearms so that they can directly deal with the rising crime rate in the capital.

In his proposed resolution, Councilor Julio Logarta Jr. of the sixth district also blamed police for what he called their "inaction in combating criminality." He said residents should be able to defend their lives, loved ones and property amid the erosion of peace and order in the city.

"To protect the citizens and take the fight against criminal elements into a higher ground by way of direct citizen participation, the residents of Manila must be encouraged to arm themselves," Logarta said in Draft Resolution No. 4869.

The councilor said that incidence of crime of drug trafficking, robbery, street fighting by youth gangs, and snatching, holdups, burglary and murder, committed in broad daylight in many parts of the city is a "glaring" reason why residents should be armed.

Logarta, who chairs the council's transportation committee, said city officials and barangay chairs would be tasked to organize all licensed gun holders in the city into "barangay self-defense units."

The units would make the fight against criminality "a concerted and no nonsense effort by the people themselves."

Logarta's proposal was referred to the committees on laws and on peace and order during the Council's session on Thursday.

Some councilors said groups opposing or favoring the right to bear arms must be consulted about the measure. Other councilors want the city police to provide pertinent data on the capital's crime rate and the number of residents, who owned guns.

Earlier, several city and municipal councils in war-torn parts of Mindanao and in provinces infested by communist rebels have also proposed that citizens should be allowed to arm themselves.

15 hurt in Slex accident

AT LEAST 15 people were injured when a passenger bus rammed into a concrete post at the South Luzon Expressway early yesterday morning.

Three of the victims were seriously hurt, including bus driver Romeo Duran, 46, of Sipucot, Camarines Sur, said Manny Prades of the Philippine National Construction Corp.

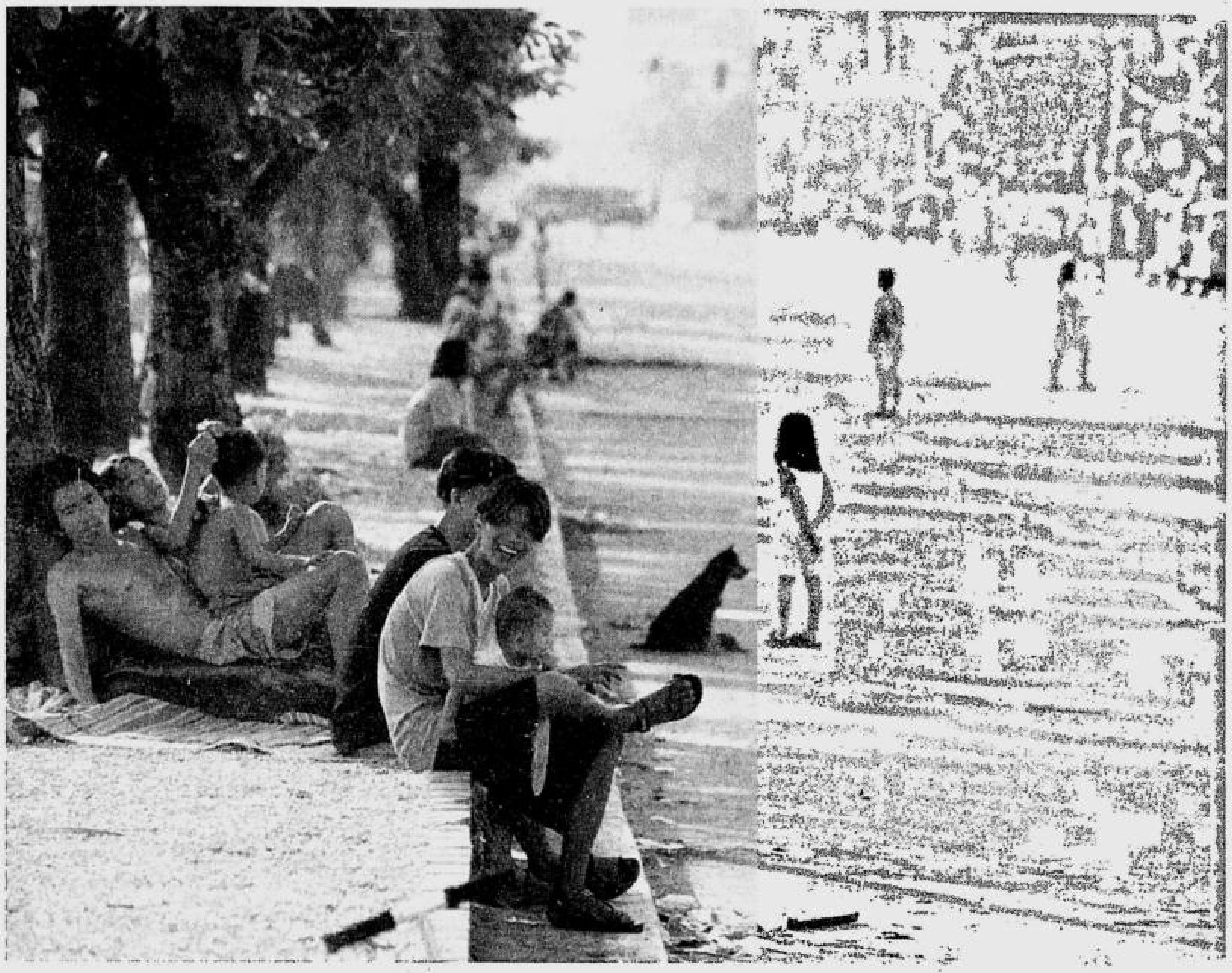
Duran suffered multiple injuries in the head and body, police said.

Duran and eight other victims were rushed to the Parañaque Medical Center. The rest of the victims were brought to the South Superhighway Medical Center.

Prades said the BLTB bus, with license plate number DJH-276, was about to enter the Skyway when it accidentally hit a concrete column in front of Europharma at 4:55 a.m. yesterday.

Authorities are still trying to determine what caused the accident, but initial investigation showed that the driver might have dozed off, Prades said.

The bus was on its way to Manila from Naga City. *Christian V. Esguerra*



ERIK ARAZAS

STREET LIFE

Life seems to have become nice and easy as well as roomy for many residents of San Andres, Manila after this portion of the South Superhighway near Quirino Avenue is closed off to vehicular traffic while the street is undergoing repair. The closure has given the residents a "park" for playing; strolling and sitting under the tree.

Civilians start to fight back

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

ANGRY barrio residents of Zamboanga City caught a Moro rebel and hacked him to death. The rebel's comrades had escaped the day before using 100 civilians hostage.

The vigilante killing was in apparent retaliation to the holding of civilian hostage by Moro rebels loyal to Nur Misuari.

That sent a message to Moro rebels that civilians, mostly Christians, have reached the end of their patience and fear. From now on, they will stand up to the abuses committed against them by the Moros.

***

Up to a certain point, civilians can be cowed by armed groups that abuse them. They will shudder in fear before their oppressors. Who wouldn't be intimidated when one is facing the barrel of a gun?

But the same fear can change into righteous anger. And hell will break loose.

We witnessed righteous anger of the citizenry during Edsa I and Edsa II.

***

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) knows this only too well. In the 1970s, Ilonggo residents in the Cotabato provinces fought the Moro rebels who were involved in the massacre of Christians.

The MNLF rebels thought that by beheading Christians identified with the government in public, they would instill fear among the populace.

They were wrong, dead wrong. The Ilonggos, mostly farmers who have settled down in Mindanao from the Visayas after they were given land by the government in the 1950s, were a tough bunch.

***

Ilonggos retaliated *a la* Israelis vis-a-vis the Arab Muslims. For example, when Muslim rebels killed five innocent civilians, the Ilonggos retaliated by killing 10 Muslims. An eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth.

If the Moros beheaded innocent Christians, the Ilonggo farmers upstaged them by killing some Muslim rebels or civilians and mutilating their bodies.

The MNLF rebels in the Cotabato provinces did not hold the Christian population in fear of them. They stopped abusing civilians. They realized their relatives and fellow Muslims could become victims of retaliation.

***

The days of the Abu Sayyaf terrorists in Basilan are numbered. The Christian civilians in that province have probably reached the end of their patience.

When civilians rise up in revolt against their tormentors, the government can just sit up and watch. The civilians will do the job of punishing the terrorists for the government.

There's a limit to patience and fear.

The Chinese military strategist Lao Tzu knew this when he said that a retreating army should not be pursued relentlessly. Why? Because a retreating enemy has no alternative but to fight back.

***

When former communist rebel Popoy Lagman was still alive and was on the run, I met with him secretly. One time, my conversations with him drifted to the abuses committed by the New People's Army (NPA) against civilians.

Lagman said the NPA had learned a bitter lesson in Davao City. He said the communist rebels learned that civilians would fight back when their oppression became unbearable.

The civilians formed themselves into a vigilante group and hunted down NPAs in the city after some of them were executed by communist hit squads.

That's the reason NPA rebels no longer harm civilians.

***

Self-styled government watchdog Linda Olaguer-Montayre accused President Macapagal-Arroyo, her husband Mike and brother Diosdado Macapagal Jr. of arranging a sweetheart deal with billionaire businessman Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. on a "compromise settlement" on the controversial P130-billion coconut levy funds.

That's her latest tirade against the President. She says that as secretary general of the People's Consultative Assembly (PCA), she scrutinizes the doings in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration. The PCA unashamedly claims it installed GMA in her position.

But does Montayre, a former nun, have the moral authority to act as government watchdog?

***

Not if we believe her brother, Eduardo Olaguer Jr.

On April 26, 2000, Olaguer filed before the Office of the Ombudsman a case against Montayre, accusing her and several government and private executives of conspiracy to commit extortion.

Olaguer claims Montayre brokered a deal for the sale of his 6,000-square-meter office building to the government. He said Montayre and her associates got a 10- percent commission. Olaguer said he found out later that the 10 percent commission was not for the approval of the contract but for bribes and fictitious expenses "for the illegal and unnecessary follow-up of the sale."

Now, if her own sibling cannot trust her, why should the citizenry trust Montayre?

***

The Department of Justice should take a hard look at the goings-on at the Bureau of Corrections, one of the agencies under it.

My sources say Corrections Director Ricardo Macala is running the agency like a business concern.

For example, according to these sources, Macala has employed close relatives to collect money from rich inmates. His son, Abner, and son-in-law, Noel Mendoza, have allegedly divided the New Bilibid Prisons into business zones. The two, my sources say, collect "tong" from rich inmates for the privileges given to them. The privileges include having quarters separate from other inmates, and owning TV sets, refrigerators and other appliances in their quarters.

But the most despicable irregularity committed by the two Macala relatives, say my sources, is allowing drugs into the prison compound in exchange for big sums of money.

By the way, the young Macala and Mendoza are both Lipa City policemen. What are they doing at the New Bilibid Prisons?

New resto to rise in the garden. . .

(From page A25)

Days after a fire razed Republic of Malate, her popular restaurant and bar along A. Mabini Street in Malate, Manila, Ledesma announced that she decided to convert the garden of her house in Pasay City into an open-air dining place.

The new restaurant, to be called Good News Caf,, will be similar to Sonya's Garden in Tagaytay City, according to Ledesma. It will employ the same staff who used to run Republic of Malate (Roma).

"We have about 30 staff members who would be jobless so we decided to accommodate them by putting up this restaurant," Ledesma said.

"Actually, we had been planning this a long time ago, but now we want to try it for Christmas. I will open my house to the public for the whole month of December and people can come for dinner."

Ledesma looked none the worse even if she failed to salvage anything from the Malate fire, which ravaged the P20-million restaurant. She hardly looked affected by what most people would consider a misfortune.

"When people ask me how the fire started, I tell them this is God's plan for me and my family," she said. "It happened for a reason so I didn't question God. He has a perfect plan for each of us.

"God allows Satan to do anything he wants to do to you. If I cry, I would only make Satan happy. Satan's objectives are to steal, kill or destroy. He wants to wreak havoc on your life. But when you reach a certain level of your relationship with God, nothing can steal your joy."

A lot of people, especially Ledesma's show biz colleagues, at first thought she was shattered by the incident. But she said she did not have any regrets, nor did she shed a single tear.

"If something like this happened and I was not ready, I would have been devastated," the pop diva said. "But I have no remorse. I don't own anything in that place. All those are only material things. Everything belongs to God, so He can take it anytime."

Ledesma disputed allegations that the fire was a case of arson, that it was intentionally set so she could collect insurance because her business was losing money.

"The restaurant was worth P20 million," Ledesma said. "Our insurance does not cover even half the amount. If it was arson, I would have removed all the expensive memorabilia from there. I devoted eight months of my life to building the place."

Ledesma said her estranged husband, Louie Quirino Gonzalez, also spent six years in Los Angeles putting up his memorabilia collection which he displayed at the Survival Caf, on the second floor of Roma.

"When we were still living in LA, I would go to the flea markets just to scout for memorabilia," Ledesma said. "But there'll be lots of flea markets around so I'm not worried."

She said she is not really bothered by the talk.

"I know there will always be people who will talk like that, but I am more at peace. God will protect His children and they will be restored more than twice."

Ledesma also pointed out Roma had no faulty electrical wiring that could have sparked the fire.

"Our electrical design was done very well," she said.

To raise money for the staff of Roma, Ledesma, with the help of her estranged husband, will mount a fund-raising concert on Dec. 15 at the parking lot of the ruins of Roma.

"Several bands who performed at Roma have pledged to perform in the show for free," Ledesma said.

When she opens her garden restaurant, she will also initiate community work in her neighborhood, according to the singer. This year, she started gathering teeners in the community for regular Bible study sessions in her residence.

"Five months ago, I really went on a higher level in my relationship with God," Ledesma said. "I spend more hours for quiet time and listening to tapes of Christian preachers.

"We are only pawns and soldiers of God. I want to give glory to God every moment of my life. He's so sovereign and mighty. Who I am to question that?"

The other staff of Roma will work in Ledesma's soon-to-open Tagaytay hideaway, Heaven's Gate, which, she said, is an ideal place for weddings and spiritual retreats.

Ledesma is also set to mount a fund-raising concert series, "On Higher Ground," to be co-produced by Music Museum owner and close friend Precy Florentino.

"We also want to raise money to put up libraries for small communities," Ledesma said.

Carlson to be buried . . .

(From page A25)

Abaya, now the archbishop of the Nueva Segovia in Ilocos Sur, was the officiating priest when Carlson married former Ilocos Norte governor and former congressman Rodolfo Fari□as on Nov. 28, 1994.

The family's architect Rex Hofile□a said a 50-square-meter structure was built next to the graves of Fari□as' father Federico and eldest brother Federico Jr.

The new structure costs about P300,000, and has a dome-type mini chapel to serve as Carlson's final resting place. Carlson will be buried in an underground vault in the mausoleum.

A crew of about 40 people started building the structure on Monday, three days after Carlson fell to her death from her 23rd floor condominium unit in Platinum 2000 in Greenhills, San Juan. She was living alone in the condominium with only a part time maid.

The chapel where she will be laid to rest today had not yet been completed as of Friday. Only its skeletal frame had been erected as carpenters worked on a back wall and its posts.

"The chapel will look far different than this tomorrow," Hofile□a assured. "We used massive stones as finishing to complement the existing mausoleum." The mausoleum has a receiving area and a comfort room.

Hofile□a said a stone angel ordered abroad would be on top of Carlson's tomb. She was known to be a collector of angel figurines, and had told close friends that she wanted to be an angel when she died.

The structure will be covered with a synthetic skylight roofing to allow natural light to flow on Carlson's flat tomb.

Carlson's two sisters, Gigette Kruz and Joanna Bronson, who arrived in Manila from the United States are expected to attend her burial today. Her close friends from the movie industry are also expected to attend the burial.

Militants hail . . .

(From page A25)

KMU and party-list Bayan Muna have long been demanding a P125 wage increase for workers and a P3,000- increase for government employees.

The base pay of government employees is pegged at P4,840 monthly.

Revilla, in his bill, pointed out that this was too small, given the many mandatory deductions to a worker's pay such as taxes and GSIS remittances.

In his bill, Revilla made a strong case for the salary adjustment, basing it on studies conducted by the Department of Labor and Employment and the private think tank Ibon Foundation.

According to the DOLE's National Wages and Productivity Commission, a family of six in Metro Manila needs to earn P16,073.20 monthly or P535.77 daily to be able to live decently.

This finding was supported by Ibon Foundation which pegged its own daily wage figure figure at P505.81.

A Metro Manila government employee with the lowest pay grade of P4,840, will need an additional P11,233.20 to be able to meet the daily cost of living.

Peace returns to Nida's neighborhood

BY TJ BURGONIO

SHORTLY after the murder of actress Nida Blanca, Nathan Lane in White Plains subdivision in Quezon City, where the multi-awarded lived with her husband Rod Strunk, was a circus where media people and kibitzers camped out for their daily dose of lurid details on the killing.

But it's now unusually quiet in the neighborhood, which has been deserted after the media were banned inside the village last week. And it is back to normal with only a few private cars passing through the road.

Residents, who have complained about the media's intrusion into the private enclave since Blanca's death, have heaved a collective sigh after regaining their peace.

"We're back to normal," said one resident. "Now everything is quiet. We don't have to deal with problems like traffic, security and the intrusive media."

The last time the media were allowed inside the subdivision was when Blanca's daughter Katherine Jones-Torres held a news conference in her mother's house at 28 Nathan Lane last Saturday.

Since then, even Blanca's house has regained its usual calm. Except for a handful of agents from the National Bureau of Investigation posted outside Blanca's house, there were no other signs that would point at the house as the actress' home. The NBI was now providing security to Blanca's daughter.

The stream of Blanca's show biz friends and close relatives into the house has also stopped.

"Since Saturday, nobody among their closest friends and relatives visited the residence," said a guard, who is tasked with screening visitors of Blanca's family.

From the time Blanca was found dead from stab wounds inside her car on Nov. 7 until she was buried a week later, a large group of media people had poured into the subdivision.

With their OB vans parked on both sides of Nathan Lane, TV reporters waited outside Blanca's home and the subdivision chapel a few houses away. The broadcast reporters would air live feeds on Blanca's tragedy from time to time.

Soon, a larger crowd of kibitzers started trooping into the subdivision, not to offer sympathy to the actress' bereaved family, but to catch a close glimpse of their favorite stars, who came to pay their last respects to a stalwart of the movie industry.

"That time, we had problems controlling the crowd," said another resident. "They walked on the garden outside the chapel and clambered up the walls."

After Blanca's burial, the crowd thinned out and the media people disappeared from sight, but only briefly.

A few days after Blanca was buried, the subdivision was again invaded by members of the media hungry for news when police presented confessed killer Philip Medel Jr., who also tagged Blanca's husband Strunk as the mastermind. (Medel had retracted his confession later and tagged police as his torturers when he would not own up to the killing.)

"Things did not turn out well that day," said the resident. "The media just rushed inside the subdivision without coordinating first with the homeowners association."

This proved to be the last straw.

Following complaints from residents, especially neighbors of Blanca, Ms Torres issued a letter to the media appealing for restraint.

"While we respect your trade and responsibility to deliver news, our family believes that a certain level of respect, privacy and security are also due us," she wrote in the letter.

Since then, media coverage was prohibited inside the subdivision also as part of the security measures on Ms Torres.

The ban on the media remained even after Medel recanted his statement at the Department of Justice four days after he "confessed," and the reporters covering the Blanca slay story were not allowed inside the subdivision to get reactions from Ms Torres and Strunk.

Members of the media were only allowed to cover Torres' press conference held at the barangay hall the following day, apparently on the request of the residents.

Saudi cites Filipino recruiter

DORMIENDO (second from left) receives citation in Riyadh, together with (from left) H.J. Park of Daelin, Fahad Musabhi of S. Oger, K.M. Kim of Daelin and Amman Ullah of East West.

WHILE the economy is in the doldrums, unemployment figures continue to rise, and investment prospects look grimmer than ever, one business area has successfully transformed the widespread crisis into a golden opportunity—manpower recruitment for overseas jobs.

The continuing diaspora of Filipinos seeking all kinds of jobs anywhere else in the world is one clear sign that times are indeed bad for the average wage earner who will do everything possible, or well-nigh impossible, just to land that elusive job abroad. From Saudi Arabia and Japan to Hong Kong and Italy, the list of countries where Filipino migrant workers have sought employment has now grown to include even such non-traditional destinations as Central Asia, Eastern Europe, even parts of Africa.

The number of recruiters has also grown to such an alarming rate that the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) has to keep their ranks in check, especially now that more Filipinos are coming home with harrowing stories of painful experiences in the hands of their recruiters and employers.

Job seekers have to be constantly reminded to deal only with placement agencies duly authorized and licensed to recruit, hire and process for their duly accredited foreign principals. One such agency is East West Placement Center Inc., which has deployed thousands of workers since 1993 when it started. Besides its head office in Manila (on Chino Roces Avenue corner Sacred Heart Street, Makati City), it has opened a Visayas branch in Cebu City (Jacosalem Street), and a Mindanao branch in Davao City (Roseco Bldg., L.M. Guerrero).

According to company president Rizaline Dormiendo, East West supplies manpower for petrochemical, pipeline, refinery, heavy industry and construction projects, and provides services in engineering, consultancy, hotel and food industry, as well as building operation and maintenance and hospital management.

"Our rate of deployment averages 300 monthly but we have reached a maximum level of 700 workers," Dormiendo says.

A Business Management graduate, Dormiendo maintains a hands-on policy in running her business to ensure that her company keeps up with international standards in recruitment. She is assisted by an office staff of 55 personnel as well as by three regular engineers plus two on-call engineers, and three nursing consultants.

The Samar-born executive communicates directly with her foreign partners through the company's state-of-the-art, fully computerized local area network system (LAN), the first of its kind in the local recruitment industry.

The thirty-something tireless executive recently went to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to personally receive an award for recruitment. POEA cited two of her foreign principals who were given certificates Best Employer of the Year certificates.

Not everything, though, proceeds as smoothly as expected. She recalls the case involving a Taiwanese firm, where Filipino workers opted not to finish their contracts following a violent riot between Filipinos and another group of nationals. Dormiendo says she helped in the amicable settlement of the matter with the company, in fulfillment of her obligation as head of the manpower agency.

"Filipinos are, by and large, among the best in the world, skills-wise," Dormiendo notes. "They are trained to do the job, they are hardworking, efficient, dedicated and they can stand up to the most rigorous tests. This is the reason why they remain among the workers most preferred by foreign employers. The construction workers and hospital aides are a source of pride because they have been in such high demand for a long time now."

East West Placement Center clients are some of the world's leading companies based in Athens, Greece and with offices in the Middle East. Consolidated Contractors Int'l Co. is ranked 17th in the world in the international contractors category. In the Middle East, Samama Co. is one of its leading hospital management groups, while Saudi Oger Ltd. is a well-patronized diversified company.

East West Placement Center has also looked into alleviating the plight of Filipino Muslims. Mindanao, considered a manpower non-potential sector, proved otherwise when engineer Aman Ullah, one of the agency's directors, visited it recently. An outpouring of requirements specifically for skilled and semi-skilled Muslim workers has kept East West Placement Center busier than ever. *Jerry Utod, Contributor*

Gang storms barangay hall; watchman hurt

BY NELSON F. FLORES

A BARANGAY *tanod* was injured when members of a notorious street gang stormed a barangay hall in Mandaluyong City early yesterday morning to free two other gang members who were detained for violating the curfew ordinance.

Police identified the injured watchman as Wilfredo Maballo, a resident of Barangay Pleasant Hills. He was shot in the shoulder and taken to the Mandaluyong City Medical Center.

Police said the attackers also destroyed public property worth P10,000.

SPO3 Rico Sta. Maria, Mandaluyong City police desk officer, said Pleasant Hills barangay watchmen provoked the attack when they arrested Aron Alcantara and Percy Dagaton, both Tres Kantos Gang members.

At 2 a.m., other gang members, who were said to be drunk or under the influence of illegal drugs, laid siege to the Pleasant Hills barangay hall on Fernando Street, pelting it with stones or raking it with gunfire using homemade shotguns. Sta. Maria said the timely arrival of police put a stop to the assault.

He added subsequent police operations resulted in the arrest of three more suspected gang members: Ricky Catamora, Dexter Agliyan and Richard Valdez.

Mandaluyong City Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. has ordered the immediate filing of criminal charges against the five suspects.

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Illegal connections could have sparked Munti blaze, says NBP

JUMPER cables and other illegal electrical connections might have sparked Thursday's fire at the National Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa, which gutted a building inside the maximum security compound.

Most of the 222 inmates at Building II apparently made the illegal connections to accommodate appliances in their cells, said Supt. Venancio Tesoro, NBP spokesperson.

The illegal connections resulted in an overload in the building's electrical system and triggered the fire, Tesoro said.

The fire caused P15 million in property damage, which included the inmates' appliances, he added.

Prior to the fire, prison officials switched off electricity in the compound for an hour as part of NBP's daily power-saving program, Tesoro said.

But the building's circuits were not able to accommodate the power surge when electricity was restored, he said.

The Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption yesterday asked the NBP to conduct a head-count of inmates to make sure no one has escaped during the fire.

Tesoro said the displaced prisoners—mostly political and military offenders—would temporarily stay in the prison chapel.

They will later be assigned to other cells or brought back to the burned building upon restoration. *Christian V. Esguerra*

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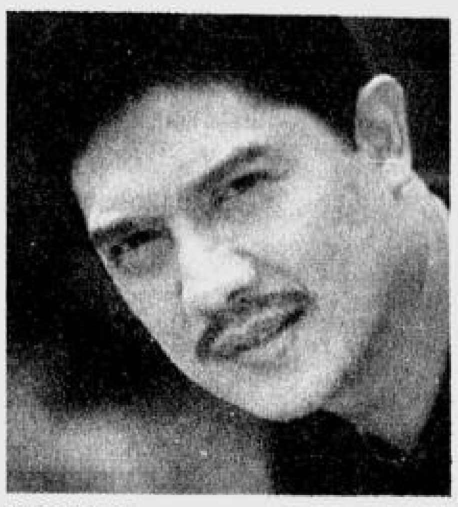

RODRIGO

ZUÑIGA

TWO popular personalities from show business, Dr. Nonoy Zuñiga and Juan Rodrigo who is a chemist by profession, are now involved in a technology that converts household and agricultural wastes into a full-blend, high-quality organic fertilizer. Zuñiga and Rodrigo have also become firm believers that incinerators are not needed to solve the garbage problem.

Recently, Rodrigo attended the demonstration seminar on the use of enzyme technology for waste management, sponsored by the University of the Philippines in Diliman. The seminar was held at the mini theater of the UP School for Urban and Regional Planning.

Chancellor Emerlinda R. Roman, Vice Chancellor Gil G. Gotiangco Jr. II and Dean Ma. Concepcion P. Alfiler also attended the seminar.

The seminar demonstration presented the use of an integrated approach to waste management, involving shredding and the use of an organic solution called Enzyme Plus. The process was developed at the Materials Recovery Facility of UP Diliman.

The lecture and demonstration was conducted by Odilon T. Sta. Teresa of WasteWise International, who is the patent holder and proponent of the enzyme technology process, and Alex C. Reyes Jr. of Handy Inc., who is the inventor of Handy shredder.

Professor Armand Basug, head of the UP Task Force on Solid Waste Management and a member of the reactor panel, validated that the technology is both timely and appropriate.

A waste recovery facility can be set up in every barangay and involves the recycling of materials back into nature or the marketplace in a manner that protects human health and the environment and promotes agricultural productivity.

The process uses an organic-based solution (US patent pending).

All-weather composting is now a reality and the issues of odor, fly infestation and leaching of effluents into groundwater have been addressed by the use of Enzyme Plus, the organic solution. There is total absence of the stench from garbage.

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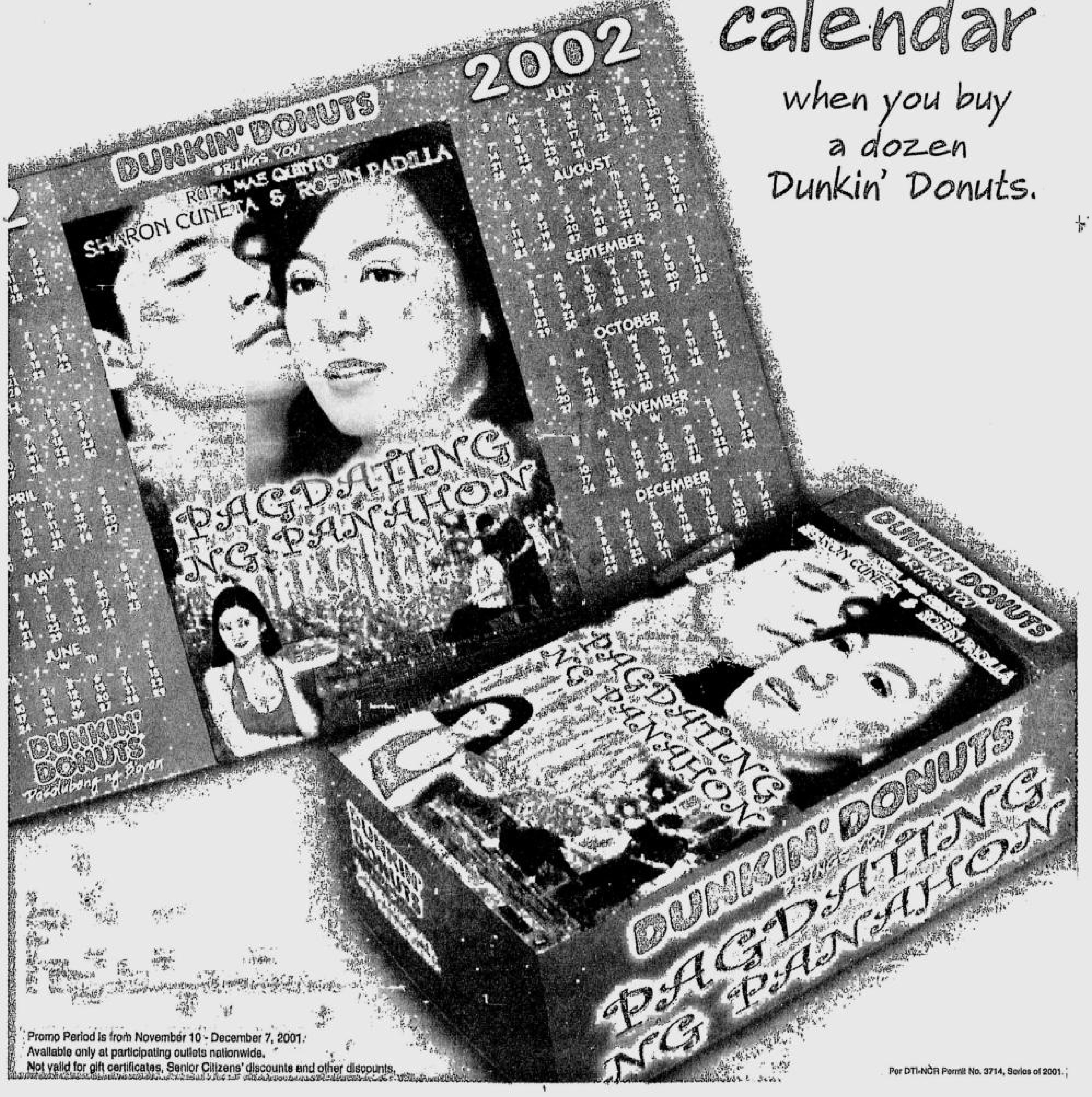

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Montalban residents protest, not in our town!

By Joey C. Papa
Contributor

YESTERDAY, Nov. 30, was National Heroes Day, a holiday for the whole country. For the people of Rodriguez (Montalban), Rizal, however, it was a day of protest against the desecration of their historical town which is about to become the dumpsite for Metro Manila's garbage starting early this month.

Boy Ruiz, Totoy Andrade and Eboy Doctor of the group Protect (People's Response for Organized Protection of the Environment) said that yesterday morning, more than 1,000 residents, including children, gathered together, passed by the residence of the town mayor who had offered the dumpsite to Metro Manila, and proceeded to the town plaza for the protest program.

An alliance of concerned citizens have banded together to .continue protesting the use of Montalban as a dump. The alliance also includes Mamamayan ng Montalban Ayaw sa Basura (Mamab), Sagip-Kalikasan, Bayan Muna, Takda, Damayan, to name a few.

According to the late historian Renato Constantino, it was in Montalban where the Katipunan "affirmed the means and end of the Philippine Revolution" in what is now known as the "Cry of Montalban."

According to Dr. Pastor Cruz and Jun Salvador, both of Mamab, Andres Bonifacio had "baptized" Montalban "Montales de Libertad" or Mountains of Liberty.

Dr. Cruz explained that the proposed dumpsite is just beside the Lukutang Munti River in Barangay San Isidro, only four to five kilometers away from the local Catholic church. The river is crystal clear, teems with fish and is surrounded by fruit trees.

Sanctuary

The proposed dumpsite is also among the areas that the Marcos administration declared in 1979 as National Parks and Wildlife sanctuary.

Marcos developed the area into a mountain resort, with a *bahay-bahayan*, log cabins, wild animals, and tropical birds. Cruz said that during the Aquino administration, "all the centuries-old trees were 'massacred' and all the cabins were 'stolen,'" and the wild animals disappeared. The situation became worse, he said, under the Ramos administration because the DENR allowed 31 quarry operators to destroy the mountains surrounding San Isidro and San Rafael. "Today," said Cruz, "the death of Montalban, San Mateo, and Metro Manila and the residents is imminent because of the poison from the thousands of tons of garbage dumped in Montalban. For sure, all this garbage will go back to Metro Manila because the river just beside (the dumpsite) is located in an elevated area and it is connected to the Montalban, San Mateo, Marikina and Pasig rivers. The Marikina and Pasig rivers will turn into *esteros* filled with garbage. '

He said the Lukutang Munti River is within the Marikina

Valley fault line which will cause the fast seepage of the leachate (*katas ng basura*), causing underground water contamination. The people who drink from deep wells and pumps will drink the water contaminated with leachate, which contains pathogenic bacteria or microbes that can cause cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, tuberculosis, and other illnesses, according to Cruz.

The leachate from chemicals such as lead, cadmium, mercury, copper, and other toxic elements would cause cancer of the liver, kidney, urinary bladder, brain, stomach, the blood (leukemia), and lungs, he said.

Astounding

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was herself astounded by the beauty of the place, according to Cruz. Yet why has she reportedly allowed the garbage of Metro Manila to be dumped in Montalban?

If they go ahead and succeed in turning Montalban into a garbage dump, they will be held forever responsible for destroying the town which also serves as watershed of Metro Manila.

"We are very sad about what is happening to God's creation," said Sister Hermie, who has lived with other sisters in the town's Bahay Madre for seven years now. The sisters said they are actively supporting Mamab.

It has been reported that the access road for the garbage trucks has already been laid out. The road cuts through the very interior of the La Mesa Dam, and many trees along its path had to be felled.

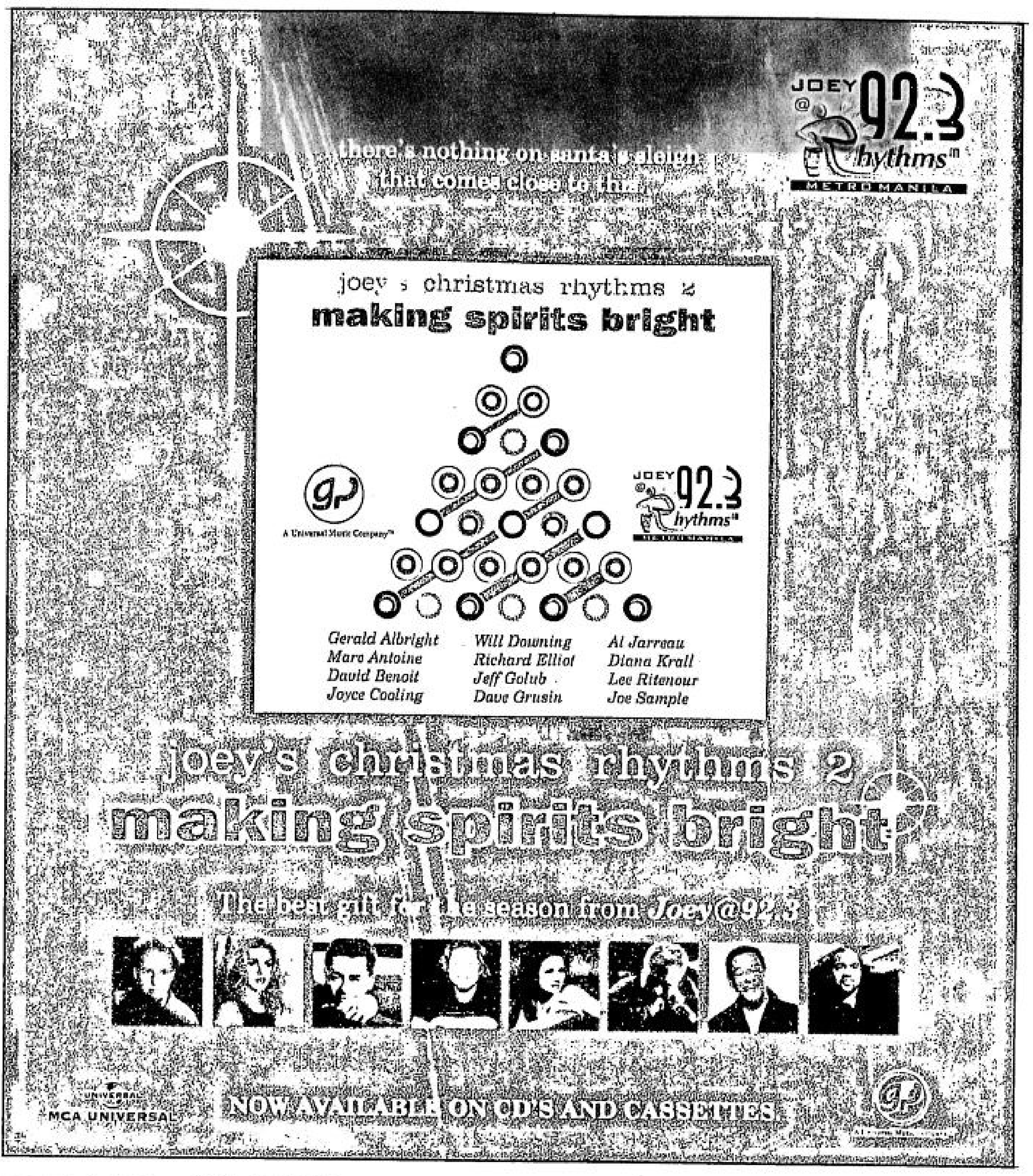
Jose Mabanta, administrator of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, wrote Col. Francisco Bravo, commanding officer of the 51st Engineering Brigade of the Philippine Army, to "discontinue any works inside The La Mesa Reservation in connection with the proposed access road for the Montalban dumpsite . . . until the engineering design and plans are reviewed and approved by the MWSS Engineering Department. We will issue a permit for you to commence work as soon as the plans and work specifications are finally approved by this office."

Mamab said the MWSS should not give its approval. Still, the damage has been done.

The Montalban residents are saying that a massive show of protest is imperative because the impact of the proposed Montalban dumpsite would be widespread.

It must be noted also that the New People's Army rebels in Rizal area are known to have declared that they, too, would oppose the use of Montalban as a dumpsite.

(The author may be reached at bangon_kalikasan@skyinet.net.)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3	OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW
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ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	TIKIM
REMAR	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
REMAR-2	TIKIM
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
B	TIKIM
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	GLITTER
CINEMA-2	HARRY POTTER
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	HUWAG KANG KIKIBO
CINEMA-2	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
CINEMA-3	WEYT A MINIT
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MONSTER, INC.
CINEMA-6	TIKIM
CINEMA-7	ANO BANG MERON KA?
CINEMA-8	KAPITAN AMBO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	MONSTER, INC.
CINEMA-12	OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW
CINEMA-14	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
CINEMA-15	PAGDATING NG PANAHON
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	SERENDIPITY
CINEMA-2	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-3	MONSTERS, INC.
CINEMA-4	MONSTERS, INC.
CINEMA-5	OTHER SIDE OF THE LAW
CINEMA-6	HARRY POTTER
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

Makati officer shoots self

A MAKATI City policeman is in critical condition after he accidentally shot himself in the head yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as PO2 Willy Gatchalian, 48, of Barangay Pitogo, Makati City. He is fighting for his life at the Makati Medical Center after sustaining a gunshot wound in the right temple.

The accidental shooting happened at 11:35 a.m., police said.

Neighbors said they heard a gunshot while Gatchalian was arguing with his wife.

However, police reports said Gatchalian was getting ready to go to work when his 9mm service firearm suddenly went off, hitting him. *Alcuin Papa*

Munti grenade blast kills 1

By Christian V. Esguerra

A HAND grenade yesterday ripped through a Muntinlupa shanty, killing a vendor and injuring three others.

The blast killed Edgardo Ybanez, 23, and severely injured his brother Edwin, 18, Rolando Sitoy, 19, and Randy Rojo, 25, police said.

Authorities said the blast was not related to the explosion of a homemade bomb that killed a suspected bomb maker in Victoria Homes, Muntinlupa, early last month.

Edgardo, a vendor, found the grenade in a cart around 10 a.m. yesterday and took it to his shanty in a slum in Upper Sucat, said case investigator PO3 Benjie Madriaga.

The surviving victims told police that the fragmentation grenade looked like an "atis" and was wrapped in marking tape.

At home, Edgardo and Sitoy were inspecting the explosive when it accidentally went off about 11 a.m.

Shrapnel immediately killed Edgardo while Sitoy lost his right hand in the explosion, police said.

Man stabs brod

EXTREME jealousy led a 29-year-old man to kill his younger brother as they celebrated the latter's birthday in Pasig City late Wednesday night, police said yesterday.

Police identified the victim as Reynaldo Pagtama, 27, a resident of Barangay Sta. Lucia, Pasig City. He was pronounced dead on arrival at the Medical City Hospital due to a stab wound in the chest.

His assailant, his brother Boy, escaped, police said.

Investigation showed that the incident happened about 10:30 p.m. while the brothers were drinking at home.

SPO3 Rolly Lipata, Pasig City police station homicide investigator, said that the brothers got into an argument, but the subject was not immediately known. Boy then stabbed his brother twice in the chest, police said.

Lipata said sibling rivalry could be the motive for the killing.

"A manhunt is now underway for Boy Pagtama despite the refusal of his relatives to file any criminal charges against him," Lipata said. *Nelson F. Flores*

MENINGITIS BABY NEEDS NEW SURGERY

LEI Ann Canlas, 1 year and 8 months old, has been diagnosed with hydrocephalous and bacterial meningitis, needs surgery as soon as possible.

Lei Ann is the daughter of jeepney driver Lawrence Canlas and housewife Marites B. Canlas of Madapdap Resettlement in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

The baby is confined in Room 109 of the Neuro Ward of the Philippine Children's Medical Center on Quezon Avenue in Quezon City.

Food, etc. in bazaar today

SPANISH pastries, fresh fruits, mini *siopao*, Tacloban delicacies, homemade *longganisa*, salmon, *puto ube*, baklava, ham, pasta sauces, *dulong* in olive oil and garlic, cakes, cheese rolls and *ensaymada* and even a whole roasted calf are only some of the season's gourmet picks that can be found at "F.O.B. Manila 2" today at the Makati Sports Club.

"Shoppers don't just buy food for themselves, they also buy food to give away as gifts," says bazaar organizer Menchie Mabanta.

"F.O.B. Manila 2" also offers more than just food, she says. There are clothes, shoes and bags, fashion accessories, novelty and gift items, Christmas and home decor and many others from 150 vendors.

The bazaar has ample parking space and a package counter and accepts major credit cards. For more information, call 671-2497 and 671-2493, or log on to www pinoycentral.com and look for Buyer's Guide and Food.

Upsilon stages musical

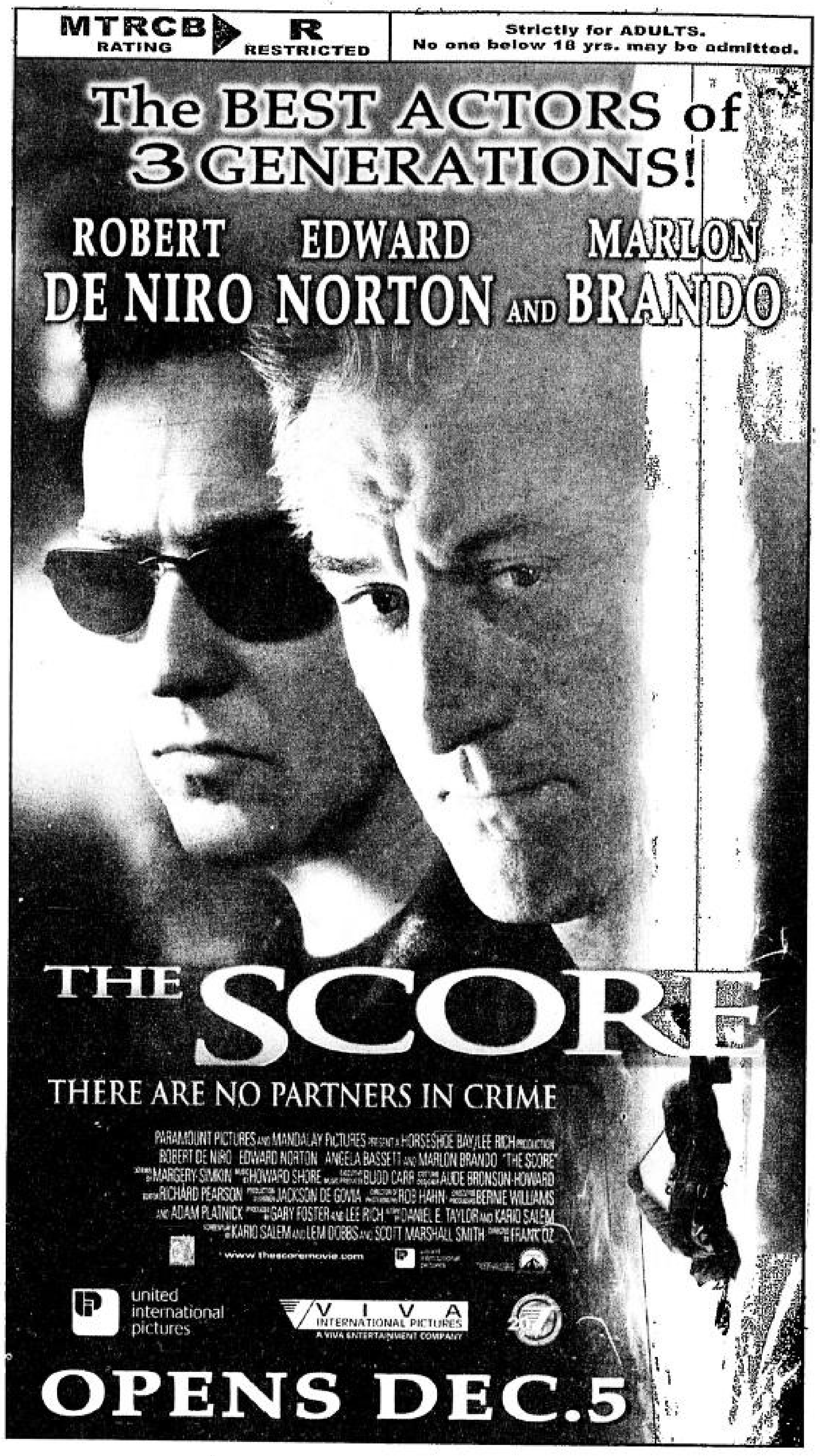
THE UPSILON Sigma Phi and the UP-CMC Broadcasting Association will re-stage "Padre Faura Sin Verguenza," an original musical play in two acts featuring resident members and surprise performers.

It is written by Victor Avecilla, with Ian Kenneth Chi-Young as musical director and directed by Lawrence Espinosa. The cast is led by Omar Romero, Dave Santos, Cindy Cayetano, Pinky Aunario and Lemuel Narcise.

"Padre Faura Sin Verguenza" is set in the UP Padre Faura Campus in 1939. It is the story of several college seniors and the challenges they face such as terror teachers, strict campus disciplinarians, campus villains, registration, political rallies and the 24-unit Spanish requirement in those days.

The UP Manila run will be today at 4 and 7 p.m. (gala) at the UP College of Arts and Sciences Little Theater, UP Manila Campus, Padre Faura Street, Ermita, Manila. The UP Diliman run will be on Dec. 6 and 7 at 6 p.m., and Dec. 8 at 4 and 7 p.m. (gala) at the Aldaba Recital Hall, University Theater, UP Diliman Campus, Diliman, Quezon City.

Tickets are P100 for the regular shows and P500 for gala performances. For information, please call 0917-5349053, 0917-8334135 or 415-3245.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Jeepney robbers kill 1

A SEAMAN was shot dead while a Mapua student was injured after they tried to fight three robbers who held up the jeep they were riding in Quiapo, Manila on Thursday afternoon.

Bobylo Saba, 39, of San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City, died after one of the three unidentified suspects shot him once. One of the robbers also pistol-whipped student Erwin Tamayo, 19, of Sampaloc, Manila, said investigator SPO1 Diomedes Labarda of the Western Police District homicide section.

The robbers took 10 cellular phones from the other passengers, Battaler said.

The robbery happened at 3:50 p.m. while the jeepney, driven by a certain Edwin de la Paz, was traversing the Quezon Boulevard underpass in Quiapo. The jeepney had come from the Port Area and was on its way to Project 6 in Quezon City.

The suspects were armed with knives and handguns.

Philip C. Tubeza

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HARRY POTTER - GP
12:40, 3:50, 7:00, 10:00

MONSTERS, INC. - GP
11:25, 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50

MONSTERS, INC. - GP
12:30, 2:35, 4:40, 6:45, 8:50

SERENDIPITY - P 13
11:35, 1:45, 3:55, 6:05, 8:15, 10:25

HARRY POTTER - GP
10:50, 1:50, 5:00, 8:10, 11:00

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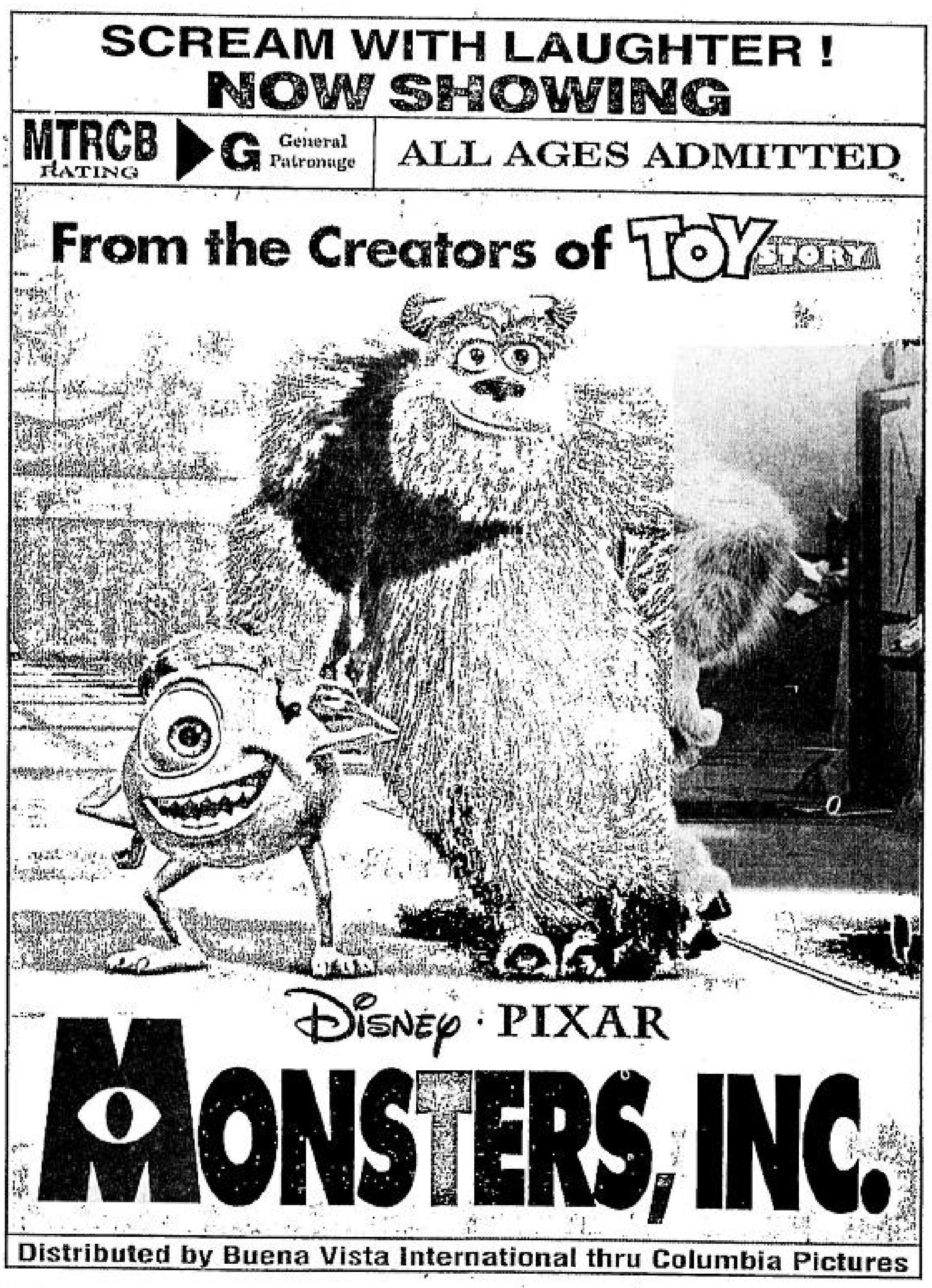
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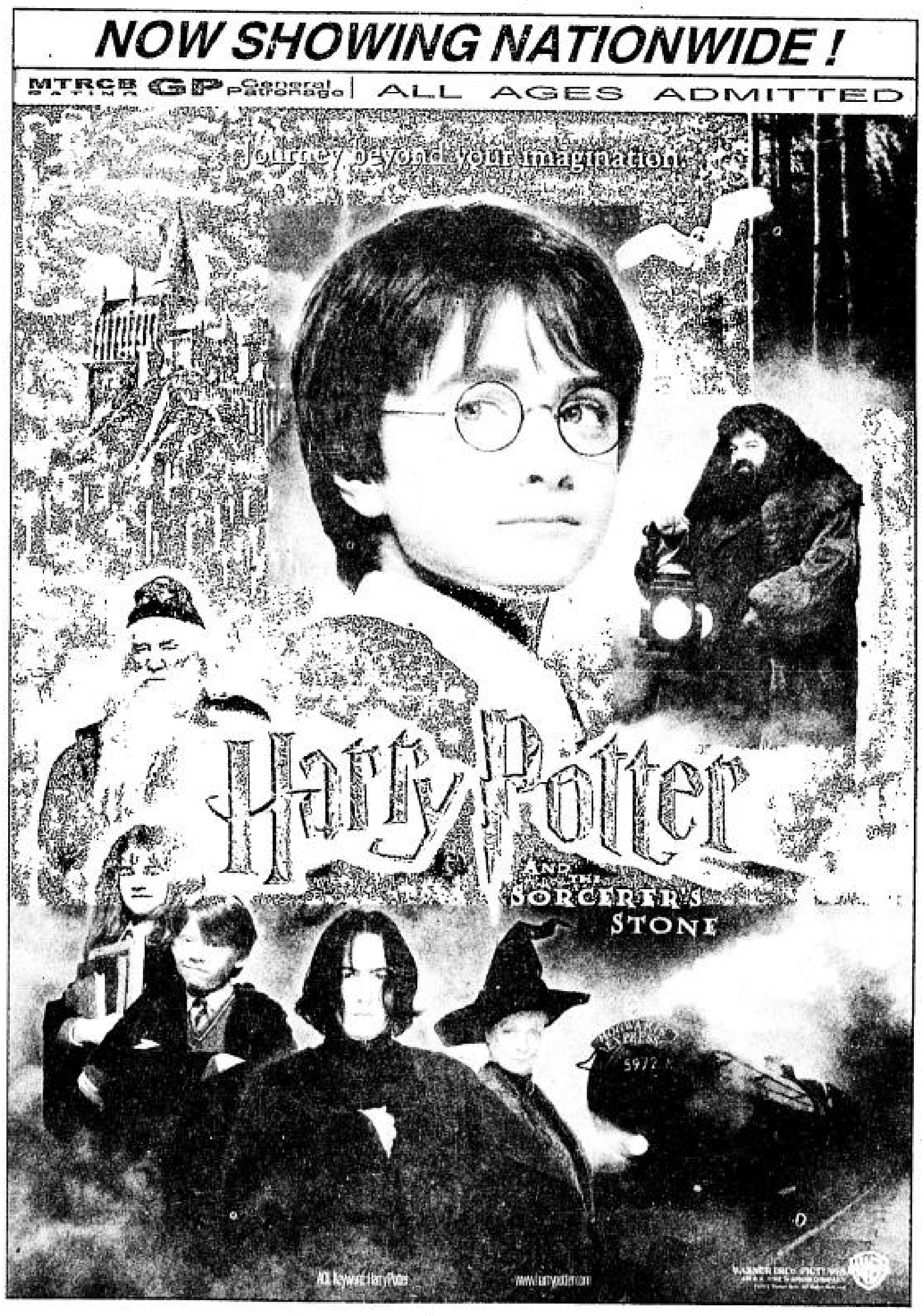
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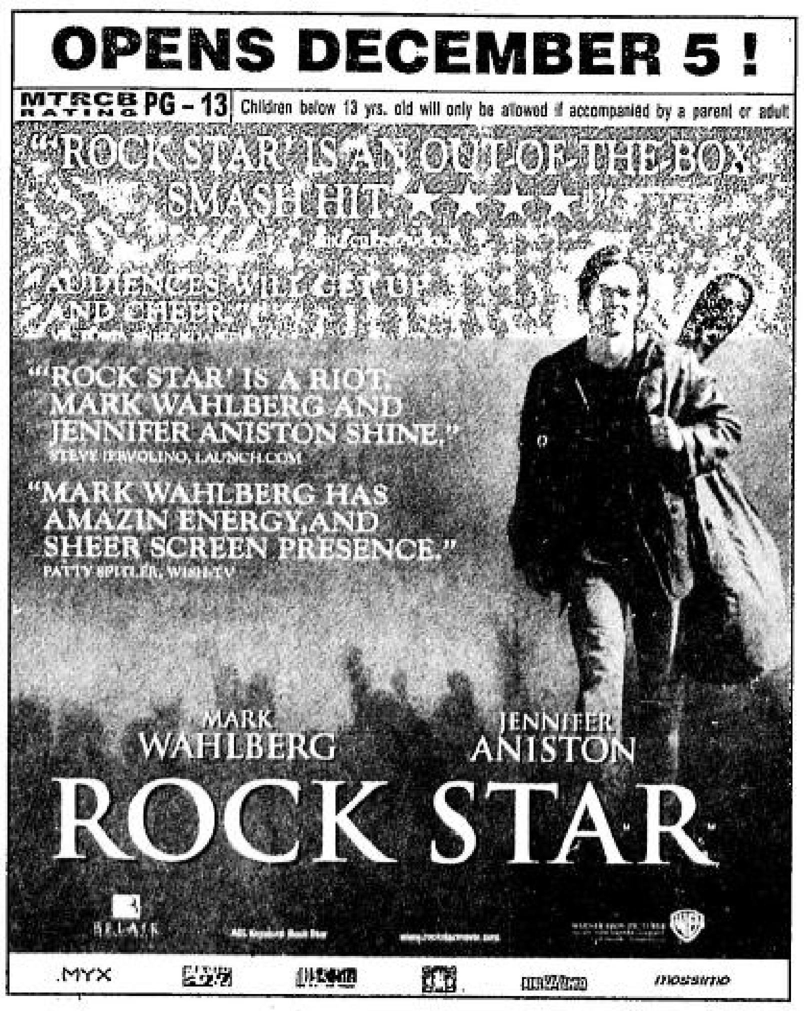
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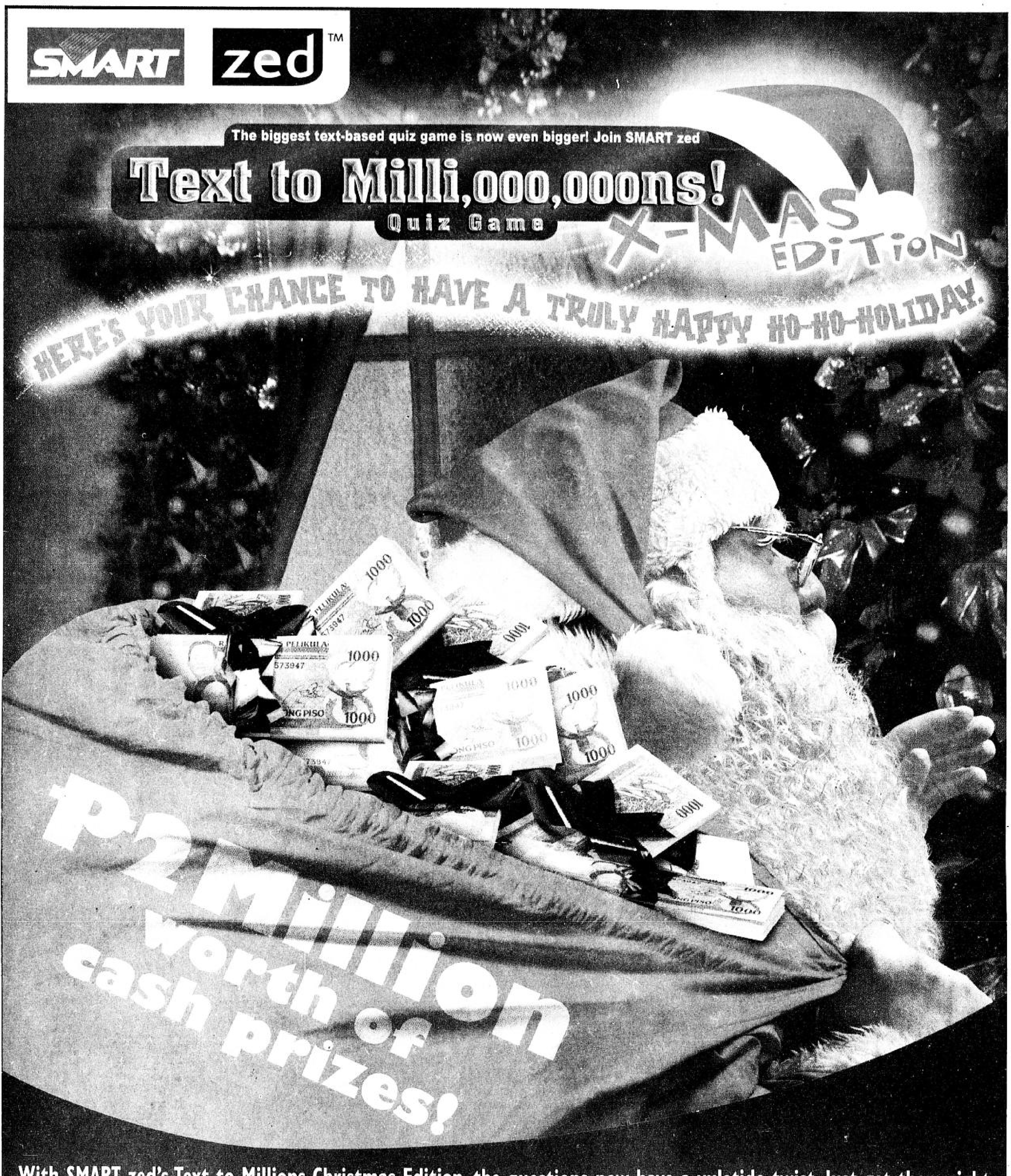
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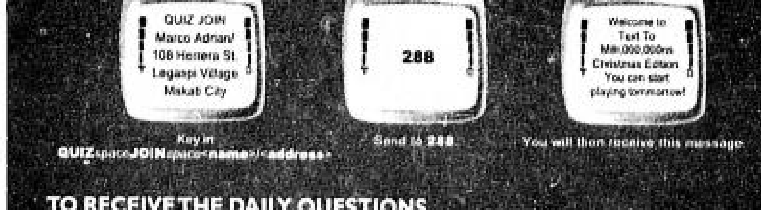
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Key in **QUIZ** space **JOIN** space **<name>**/**<address>**

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TO ANSWER QUESTIONS

Key in **QUIZ** *space* **<QUESTION NUMBER>** *space* **<ANSWER>**
Example: **QUIZ 1 A**, and send to **288**.

Participants will be charged ₱2.50 for each answer s/he sends to 288 for the game. The participants will not be charged for questions received.

TO QUALIFY FOR THE RAFFLES

3 correct answers = 3 points = 1 raffle entry

Participants should finish answering the three (3) multiple choice questions by 12 midnight of the same day the questions were received in order to earn one raffle entry. A maximum of one (1) raffle entry can be made in one day. In the event that the participant fails to complete all three (3) correct answers for the day, his/her points will be carried over to the next day or until she completes three (3) correct answers within that same week. Participants may accumulate as many raffle entries as they can for the period of one week.

TO VIEW RAFFLE ENTRIES

Key in **QUIZ ENTRY** and send to **288**. The processing of points and raffle entries earned by each participant is done every 12 midnight, at the end of each day. The participant should check his/her standing before starting each game/day. *Rate for Quiz Entry is ₱2.50.*

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Group to buy Boni lot for ₱2.5B

By Doris C. Dumlao

FORT Bonifacio Development Corp. is finalizing a P2.5-billion deal with a consortium of property developers led by businessman Carlos Rufino for the sale of a 2.7-hectare property within the 150-hectare Fort Bonifacio Global City.

In a briefing, FBDC senior vice president Vicente Tinsay III said the sale of the lot—covering an area called Bonifacio compound that is earmarked for residential development—would be closed by the year's end.

While Tinsay did not identify the buyer, INQUIRER sources said this was the group led by Rufino, also an SVP at FBDC. Rufino has given notice that he would quit his FBDC post by the end of the year to head the Bonifacio compound consortium.

Incidentally, Rufino is also joining a group led by Ayala Land Inc. that is bidding for the 69.6-percent stake held by Metro Pacific Corp. in Bonifacio Land Corp.

MPC has put its controlling stake in BLC on the block as part of measures to reduce P12 billion worth of debts, excluding the P2.5-billion debt of FBDC and the P2.8-billion restructured debt of BLC.

FBDC is the joint venture between BLC and state-controlled Bases Conversion Development Authority to develop the 150-hectare former Fort Bonifacio military base.

Meanwhile, Tinsay said the Bonifacio compound deal was just among the number of property sales and long-term lease contracts that FBDC was working out or had already secured as part of the continued development of the Global City.

He noted that FBDC had closed earlier this year the sale of a 2,173-square meter lot on the 25-hectare e-Square IT park for P260 million.

Tinsay also said that 198 out of the 288 units of Bonifacio Ridge had been sold to date. He also disclosed that FBDC has secured new contracts from more retailers to join the likes of S&R Price Club, among them Cats Motors and MC Home Depot.

"Cats Motors, the foremost dealer and service center of Mercedez Benz cars in the Philippines, signed a lease proposal in November for a 2,500-square meter area at the proposed West Gate Car Zone. Cats Motors is expected to sign the 16-year lease contract this December as construction of the dealership and service facilities will commence in the 2nd quarter of 2002," Tinsay said.

He said MC Home Depot, a one-stop warehouse plaza for building construction and home materials and home furnishings, signed a 21-year lease agreement in October for a 26,000-square meter area at the 32nd Street beside S&R Price Club.

"More specialized retail outlets are expected to sign up with FBDC for the West Gate Car Plaza occupying an additional 5,000 square meters of space," he said.

Bonifacio Stopover at the foot of Kalayaan Road, on the other hand, now anchors tenants Shell, Jollibee and Starbucks together with Hen Lin, Japs, Kameraworld, Ralph's liquor store and Zen Day Spa. Tinsay said this Stopover would be expanded to accommodate an additional 4,000 square meters of space for more food and retail outlets.

On the office side, HatchAsia Global City Center at e-Square IT Park was completed in September and is now 80 percent leased out, he said, adding that Net One Center was likewise ready for tenant fit-out.

The anchor tenants of HatchAsia include Hatchasia.com, NEC Telecoms, Cypress Semiconductors, e-PLDT and Teletech's venture for a call center, and a Pilates gym, among others. The locators are expected to employ an initial 500 office workers.

$250-M bond deal to be inked next week

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance yesterday said it would finalize and possibly sign a $250-million, 15-year private bond issue with Credit Suisse First Boston next week.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the government would like to complete the deal with the US-based foreign investment bank next week. Edeza was not sure, however, if the funds would come in within the year.

The long-term bonds would be issued by Credit Suisse through a private placement and was meant to replace a fully committed $500-million, 10-year global bond issue.

Sources said the pricing of the bond deal was favorable to the government at only 5.2 percentage points over US treasuries of similar maturity. The spread was at par with the $450-million, five-year euro bonds that the government had sealed for National Power Corp. last Thursday.

Edeza said the proceeds from the 15-year bonds would be used to cover part of next year's budget deficit.

The government recently obtained the approval of the US Securities and Exchange Commission for the registration of $800 million worth of new securities, increasing to $1.2 billion the amount of registered securities that the Philippine government could issue in the US market.

Japan firm to expand RP venture

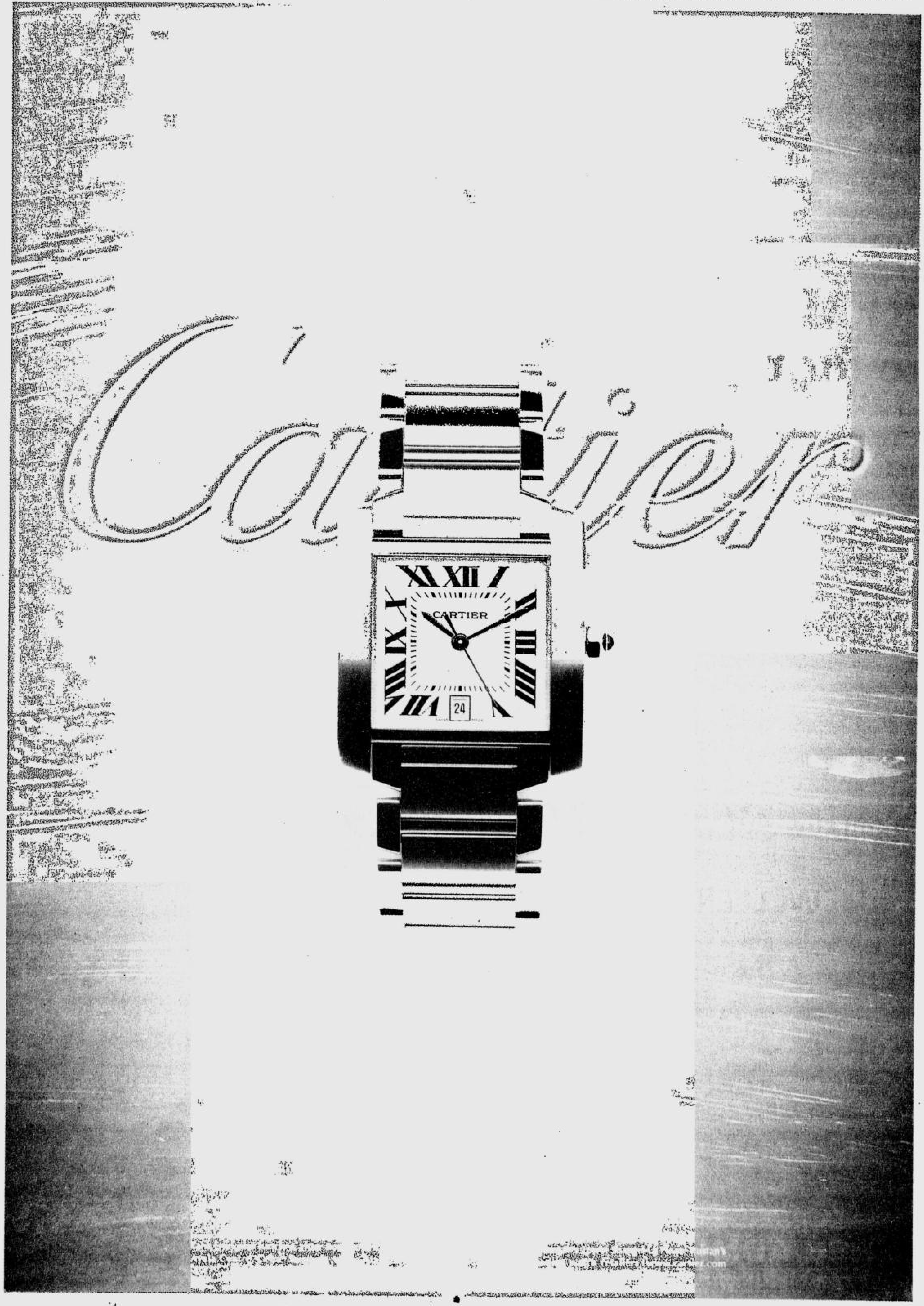
By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

JAPANESE auto parts maker Nippon Denso Co. Ltd., through its subsidiary Philippine Auto Components Inc., is investing P120 million to manufacture fuel pumps in the country.

Nippon Denso is planning to produce 214,800 units of fuel pumps at its plant in Carmelray Industrial Park in Canlubang, Laguna. It will generate up to 63 new jobs. Nippon Denso will sell the fuel pump at P2,215 per unit. The project will start commercial operations in January next year.

Nippon Denso currently manufactures the instrument cluster (speedometer, tachometer, fuel gauge and temperature gauge) which provides integrated information to the driver for safety, comfort and fuel economy. Nippon Denso has invested P552 million since it started operations in the country five years ago.

The firm will export 83 percent of its output to Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and other Asean countries. The fuel pumps will be used for Toyota's Camry and Corolla models; Honda's Accord, CRV and Civic models; and Mitsubishi Sedia units.



Stop secret

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IN this country, everybody knows just exactly how much, to the last centavo, the President of the Republic gets as "cut" in each and every top-secret, high-level deal.

Gloriaetta supposedly, based on reports, got a "commission" in a deal with San Miguel chair Danding Cojuangco on the coco levy fund. It's only about P20 billion.

Isn't it fantastic? I wonder how we can know about top secrets, particularly when we are talking to media. Probably because newsmen lap up everything that's fed to them.

Anyway, what's also fantastic is that everybody's information on top-secret, high-level deal, to the last centavo, actually finds its way to the dailies.

But what's even more fantastic is that nobody has to believe it. Stop! Me, I can't take anymore of this leaking of top secrets. It has become ordinary, forgodsakes.

Instinctively, I know I can't rely on the info of a certain Linda Montayre, who claims she's secretary general of the Philippine Consultative Assembly. The whaaat?

Honestly, I never heard much about the PCA. I don't know where it holds office. I don't know how many it has for members. Yet it's an "assembly". Pardon the ignorance!

* * *

NOW, Montayre's maiden name is Olaguer. I heard she's the stepsister of Eduardo Olaguer, who figured well in the opposition against Ferdinand Marcos.

Olaguer and Montayre are caught in a legal battle of their own. Olaguer filed before the Ombudsman cases against his sister. It's only extortion.

It seems the case had something to do with Olaguer's building in Quezon City. He wanted to sell it to the government outfit, Philippine Health Insurance Corp.

Well, the building was hacked to Westmont Bank that, based on Olaguer's claim, was foreclosing on him, through the prodding of Montayre.

Anyway, to arrange the deal with PHIC was Montayre, using her alleged connection with the administration of the man named Band . . . Wrist Band.

The deal didn't push through, but Olaguer said Montayre still wanted her "commission." Olaguer called it extortion.

* * *

STILL, the PCA gets a lot of publicity. I have a feeling it's because the so-called PCA's so-called secretary general hit a mother lode of an issue in the coco levy fund.

Look, P20 billion is a lot of money. It can pay for all my bills (i.e. short-term obligation like food and rent) and my debts (i.e. long-term obligations like tuition).

Really, it's such a fantastic amount that I don't think even Danding is crazy enough to part with it, even if the money is his to give, in the first place, which it is not.

Believe me, businessmen like Danding compute in their heads the cost-benefit of every centavo they spend. Or, in this case, give away just like that!

The alleged "top-secret, high-level" deal between Gloriaetta and Danding does not even free Danding from any of the court cases filed by the government against him.

He will not pay P20 billion for it—from out of not his own money. And if somebody found the technology for such a financial maneuver, please give me a call.

* * *

IN business, they have another way of looking at the reported top-secret, high-level deal. One bank president sums it up thus: "It's just practical."

The coco levy fund now amounts to at least P130 billion. Nobody can touch it. Not the government. Not the farmers. It has been under litigation for only 15 years.

To think, this is a country that sends its men and women to Japan to become prostitutes so that they can send back a little money home.

The deal, in effect, frees up the coco levy fund. It can then pay for things like research on new technology to modernize the coconut sector. Progress, in short.

The bone of contention of some government lawyers who are against the deal is, the fund belongs to the government. Who cares? Nobody still can use it.

And so they want the government to get all of the P130 billion for itself. How? Well, they boast that they can win the court cases. All lawyers say that to clients!

* * *

IF THEY are against this deal, and I don't think they even understand it, how then do they propose to resolve the coco levy issue? Simple. Through more years of litigation.

I can't claim to know how the public will take such a more-of-the-same impasse position, this simple status quo, which actually means nothing much happens again.

But I guess the farmers are already in the mood for a little bit of lawyer lynching. Don't you get it, boss? They want to get something out of their money right now!

So if you want to believe their claim, which is they are making noises only for the sake of the farmers, it's up to you. In court cases, only lawyers make money.

Without an alternative, as in "for right now," they have to make the deal look suspicious. Thus, there's the fantastic claim of the P20-billion bribe for Gloriaetta.

To discredit the deal, they also must do some Danding-bashing. So Danding is again the bad man. And he didn't even want to have anything to do with it!

* * *

OBVIOUSLY, a group is out to discredit Luke Roxas, top man of the troubled ASB group of companies. Well, they came out with an ad against him.

No names appeared in the ad, though. It just said they were some "unsecured" creditors of ASB. The company could not repay them.

They claimed that the Department of Justice is a bit slow in filing cases against Roxas. Hmm. To think, the department already filed 11 cases against Roxas.

That means, out of the 19 cases against Roxas which the deparment was investigating, only eight were dismissed. The others are already in the courts.

Also, they hit the SEC for the rehab plan for the ASB group. They don't know that, actually, the rehab plan benefits the unsecured creditors.

The assets of ASB are pawned to the secured creditors, mainly banks. They get first crack at everything. Without the rehab plan, the unsecured creditors have nothing.

* * *

SO WHO'S behind those "unsecured creditors," prodding them to make noises, although the noises only made them sound stupid and ignorant? I don't know.

I only know that somebody dragged the name of Roxas himself into the impeachment case against Ombudsman Aniano Desierto.

The claim was, the bribe money for Desierto came from Roxas. Later on, Roxas denied that he ever gave the money to anybody to give to Desierto.

Those are conflicting claims, nothing short of a head-on collision. Who has the credibility here—the source or the go-between?

Whatever, though, it seems that some group is out to destroy the credibility of Roxas. It's a stupid way of doing, of course, but there are always gullible unsecured creditors.

RFM, Uni-President planning to form second joint venture

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

AFTER selling its profitable soft drink unit, Cosmos Bottling Corp., the Concepcion family's RFM Corp. said it would remain in the beverage business. This time, however, RFM said the beverage venture would be limited to the manufacturing of non-carbonated drinks.

The limitation was in line with its sales agreement with the San Miguel Corp. group that prohibited the RFM group to go into the soft drink business for the next 10 years.

"But that is okay with us because we can focus on non-carbonated beverages such as juices and bottled water," RFM president Jose Concepcion III said.

Concepcion said the company was planning to tap Taiwanese retailing giant Uni-President group as a partner in the non-carbonated beverage business.

RFM and Uni-President are partners in a noodle manufacturing business. "We are just expanding our relationship," he said.

Although RFM is considering new business ventures like television broadcasting, the company will still focus on food and beverage, Concepcion said.

A 10-year non-compete clause is part of the agreement, signed last week, governing the sale of RFM's 83.2-percent stake in Cosmos to the SMC group for P11.6 billion. The total valuation for the entire soft drink company, including the budget for a tender offer, was placed at P14 billion.

RFM and the SMC group expect the financial closing of the transaction within 30 days after the signing of the agreement.

The sale included the soft drink brands Pop Cola, Sarsi and Jaz Cola. It did not include Cosmos' bottled water business.

Concepcion said Uni-President was upbeat on the business prospects in the Philippines and was willing to venture into new businesses with RFM.

The Uni-President group owns President Chain Store Corp., Taiwan's biggest retailer that bought last year the majority stake in Philippine Seven Corp., the local licensee of the 7-Eleven convenience store chain. It was the first foreign retailer to come to the Philippines after the retail trade sector was liberalized.

The Uni-President group likewise has huge business interests in food manufacturing in Taiwan.

The Uni-President group, whose entry in the Philippines was delayed by the Asian currency turmoil, is keen on infusing more investments in the country. Aside from the instant noodle business, PSC president Chin Yun Kao said in an earlier interview with the INQUIRER that his company was also interested in investing in beverage products manufacturing.

SEC approves RCBC stock rights offering

BY ELENA R. TORRIJOS

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the registration of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.'s pre-emptive stock rights offering involving the issuance of 167.036 million shares.

This is in line with the bank's program to increase its capital base by P2 billion.

SEC documents showed that RCBC expected to raise a total of P1.67 billion from the offering. The amount will be used to expand the bank's lending activities.

The pre-emptive stock rights offering, slated for this December, will allow existing stockholders of the bank holding at least 2.6 shares to subscribe to additional shares for P10 per share, or 50 percent off the bank's prevailing share price in the stock market.

The rights offering is expected to further enhance the bank's competitive strength and allow it to pursue strategic opportunities, the SEC said.

RCBC president and chief operating officer Valentin Araneta said that the stock rights offering would be the first of several moves planned by the bank to increase its capital base by P2 billion to P6 billion. This will be followed by another stock rights offering in the first quarter next year.

In a special meeting last Monday, RCBC stockholders approved the second tranche of the capital-raising program. This will entail the issuance of 32.964 million common shares through another stock rights offering to be conducted by March next year, Araneta said.

The stock rights offering in March will allow existing stockholders holding at least 18 to purchase additional shares of the bank also at P10 per share.

Combined, the two stock rights offerings are expected to raise for the bank a total of P2 billion.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, November 29, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53	53.5	51.5	51.5	181,700
China Banking Corp.	510	510	510	510	530
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	22.75	24.75	22.75	24	1,126,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	179	180	175	176	48,190
Philippine National Bank	48.5	49	48.5	49	167,500
Phil. Savings Bank	28	29	28	29	10,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	15	16	15	15	365,700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	240	240	240	240	100
Manulife Financial Corp.	1350	1350	1350	1350	1,480
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1160	1160	1140	1145	14,850
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	26.5	26.5	25.5	25.5	8,900
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.42	4,670,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	570	570	570	570	2,540
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.028	0.03	0.028	0.028	4,500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	1,000
Piltel	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	26,100,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	110,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	422.5	430	422.5	427.5	155,140
Ivantage Corp.	0.6	0.67	0.6	0.65	680,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.022	214,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	24.75	24.75	24.5	24.5	113,100
Manila Electric Co. B	31	33	31	32	952,900
Petron Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.46	1.5	12,034,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	80,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.7	1.76	1.66	1.72	12,110,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.25	0.32	0.25	0.28	160,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	20,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.95	0.96	0.94	0.95	440,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	10,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	180,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.25	12.75	12.25	12.75	521,100
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	24.75	24.75	23.75	24.25	52,100
RFM Corp.	2.02	2.18	2.02	2.16	8,136,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41.5	41.5	41	41.5	315,800
San Miguel Corp. B	51.5	51.5	51.5	51.5	130,800
Universal Robina Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	1,402,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.61	0.61	0.59	0.59	30,000
Ayala Corp.	4.85	5.1	4.85	5	13,983,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.46	1.56	1.46	1.48	4,718,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.74	0.77	2,010,000
APC Group Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	31,000,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8	9.7	8	9.7	14,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	50,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.83	0.76	0.78	23,710,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.06	0.065	0.06	0.065	28,800,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.21	12,350,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.11	0.1	0.105	1,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	0.95	0.95	800,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.08	2.1	2.08	2.1	18,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26	28	26	27	432,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.12	0.14	0.12	0.135	4,500,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.155	8,870,000
Ionics Inc.	6.8	7.2	6.8	6.9	182,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	60,000
Macroasia Corp.	1	1	1	1	62,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.67	0.68	0.67	0.68	2,720,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.34	0.41	0.32	0.41	38,900,000
Music Corp.	0.46	0.53	0.46	0.52	42,270,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.39	0.42	0.38	0.42	10,620,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	20,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.06	500,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.145	0.13	0.14	3,050,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.27	0.28	2,030,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
Cen Azucar De La Carlota	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	27,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	200,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.81	0.82	0.81	0.81	350,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	14,600
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.42	0.45	0.41	0.45	1,490,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	1,020,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	250,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	170,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	26	26	25.5	26	1,420,000
Equitable Pci Bank-War	1.5	2.3	1.5	2.1	960,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	560	560	560	560	1,000
Jollibee Warrants	12	12	12	12	3,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0016	0.0014	0.0014	129,000,000
RFM Corp. - Pref.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	39,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10	10	10	10	1,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	348,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.1	8.1	8.1	8.1	3,000
Far Eastern University	415	415	415	415	10
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	5	4.9	5	10,708,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.21	3,360,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.34	0.36	0.33	0.35	6,490,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.26	0.245	0.25	9,230,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	6,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.68	1.72	1.64	1.68	6,807,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.18	0.18	60,000
SM Development Corp.	0.85	1	0.85	1	690,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	3,098,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.07	0.095	0.07	0.09	2,400,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	50,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc. A	0.24	0.3	0.24	0.3	210,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	10,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.4	28,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.025	0.025	0.023	0.023	42,400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	2,470,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.145	0.155	0.145	0.155	5,360,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.003	0.003	0.0028	0.0028	18,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	80,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	4,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.13	200,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	5,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	9,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,916,150	78,449,105.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,003,616,590	412,282,215.00
PRO	42,890,000	90,423,970.00
Mining	162,868,000	2,769,500.00
OIL	14,000,000	226,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	1,225,290,740	584,150,790.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	444.24	DOWN 1.85
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,574.34	UP 15.55
PRO	505.97	UP 5.97
Mining	1,012.30	UP 17.81
OIL	1.39	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	700.92	DOWN 7.14
Composite	1,128.47	UP 7.90

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DATE / TIME	TITLE OF SEMINAR	PRESENTED BY:
29 November 2001		
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3pm - 4pm	Valugard: Total Auto Preservation	Valugard
4pm - 5pm	BusinessOpportunities in the Relaunch of Permatex in the Phils.	Permatex / Timken
30 November 2001		
2pm - 3pm	New Technology Tools & Equipment, Chemical Products & Assembly Systems For Use in the Automotive Industry	Centro-Aire Inc.
4pm - 5pm	Magnetic Treatment of Fuel	Taytan Int'l.
5pm - 6pm	Product Presentation	King Shoes Manufacturing
1 December 2001		
11am - 12nn	Brake Pads & Fuel Injection EFI	Quantum Spares
1pm - 2pm	New POLYGuard Bull Bars Launching	Liftruk Int'l Trading
2pm - 3pm	Universal Tools Presentation	Wiha Far East Company
3pm - 4pm	Defensive Driving Seminar	Nissan Motor Philippines
4pm - 5pm	Eyquem Spark Plugs Presentation	Eascorp Automotive
5pm - 6pm	Uniq Engine Treatment Product Presentation	Bizcom Int'l Corp.
2 December 2001		
3pm - 4pm	Product Presentation	Dayco Automotive Belts
5pm - 6pm	Turbo Stormy Air-Fuel Mixture Technology Demonstration	Bizcom Int'l Corp.

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Philratings downgrades Rockwell LTCPs

PHILIPPINE Ratings Services Corp. has downgraded by one notch its rating of Rockwell Land Corp.'s long-term commercial papers to "PRS Baa" from "PRS A" given the company's susceptibility to the country's property slump.

Philratings said that its "PRS Baa" rating denoted that Rockwell's LTCPs were "neither highly protected nor poorly secured."

Rockwell's new rating, it said, also meant that "interest payments and principal security appear adequate for the present but certain protective elements may be lacking or may characteristically be unreliable over any great length of time."

Rockwell issued P2 billion worth of LTCPs in October 1999. The debt papers are payable in 12 equal quarterly payments starting end-December next year.

"The downward adjustment in the rating considers the property developer's weak earnings generation amid a protracted market slump," Philratings explained. "The substantial level of maturing short-term debts, amounting to about P1.6 billion, likewise indicates significant re-financing needs (of the company)," it added.

Although Rockwell has quality property development projects, Philratings said that the company's earnings base and cash flow-generating ability remained vulnerable to the continuing weakness in the domestic property market.

"Its Power Plant Mall, quite successful in positioning itself in the middle-income to upscale markets, has started to generate some recurring lease income although its limited size keeps it from contributing much to total revenue," Philratings said.

Elena R. Torrijos

Bangko Sentral renews call for mergers among RP banks

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANGKO Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura has renewed his call for local banks to merge and consolidate to boost the health of the financial sector in the face of lingering global uncertainties.

"Banks must either put up new capital because a few of them need to consolidate," said the central bank chief, reversing his position a month ago that any meaningful merger was not going to be a trend for the meantime until banks shall have solved their problems with capital.

Buenaventura said the global recession was likely to deepen in the coming year and bank consolidations "may help the industry weather the storm."

The central bank chief refused to say which banks needed to boost their capital but he assured there were a few that needed to strengthen their equity. He stressed that merger incentives could also offer some relief for ailing banks.

Recently, only two medium-sized groups have gone into mergers. These were Bank of Commerce, which acquired Traders Royal Bank, and Dutch group ABN Amro, which bought out TA Bank.

The central bank chief, however, noted that some banks could not merge because of pending ownership problems or unsolved issues relating to financial health.

Sixth biggest Philippine National Bank has yet to start a rehabilitation program and has an outstanding P25-billion obligation to the BSP and Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

Eighth largest Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Buenaventura said earlier, must first look for new capital before it could undertake a successful merger. Ninth and 10th largest Allied Banking Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank both have unresolved ownership issues.

"The big ones are still busy trying to sort out their own mergers and may not find time to accommodate a new merger," Buenaventura said.

The Metrobank Group, the biggest bank in terms of assets as of the second quarter, had gobbled up smaller lenders like Solid Banking Corp. and Global Bank last year.

Second largest Bank of the Philippine Islands has completed the technical interconnection with Far East Bank last year while fourth biggest Equitable PCI Bank is just starting to recover from an image problem a year ago that led to heavy withdrawals and pushed its ranking down from third place.

These banks are not only trying to cope with lower profitability as a result of the economic slowdown but also with a rising level of bad loans as companies and individuals default on their obligations.

In the previous years, the central bank had encouraged banks to merge by requiring them to increase their capital and by imposing a moratorium on new licenses.

When he came in as BSP chief in July 1999, Buenaventura had envisioned that from the present roster, five big banks would emerge that would compete aggressively with foreign banks and eventually grow bigger and compete in the region.

To achieve this objective, the BSP had offered incentives to encourage more banks to merge and, in the process, strengthen the banking system so that it could withstand shocks even similar to the currency crisis that hit Asia in 1997.

Incentives provided by the BSP under Circular 237 last year included a temporary relief for full compliance with the prescribed net worth-to-risk asset ratio and the provision of a one-year grace period within which to comply with the ceiling on real estate exposure.

Under the circular, the existing branches and offices of the merged or absorbed institutions may be converted into branches of the new or surviving institution.

The central bank also allows merged banks to revalue their assets and implement a staggered booking of valuation reserves. The central bank also gives merged banks five years to comply with a 2-percent, across-the-board loan-loss provision.

There are close to 1,000 banks operating in the Philippines, 44 of them commercial banks.

DTI says creditors have final say on Nat'l Steel investor

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TRADE and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II said creditor-banks led by Philippine National Bank would ultimately have the last say on which investor will get the contract to lease, operate and rehabilitate National Steel Corp.

Roxas told reporters that the ongoing process of evaluating offer sheets from Allengoal Steel Trading and Fabrication Corp., Cathay Pacific Steel Corp., and Voest Alpine of Austria would be for naught unless the creditor-banks give their nod.

Roxas stressed that even before the government stepped into the impasse between creditor banks and Hottick-Renong (NSC's majority owners), NSC was already in the liquidation stage, meaning "creditors could do whatever they choose, including keeping it closed."

"(Creditor-banks) have no obligation to accept any offer or talk to anybody. The process is not a situation where everybody has to be given an equal chance. The issue of partiality has no place in the process," Roxas said.

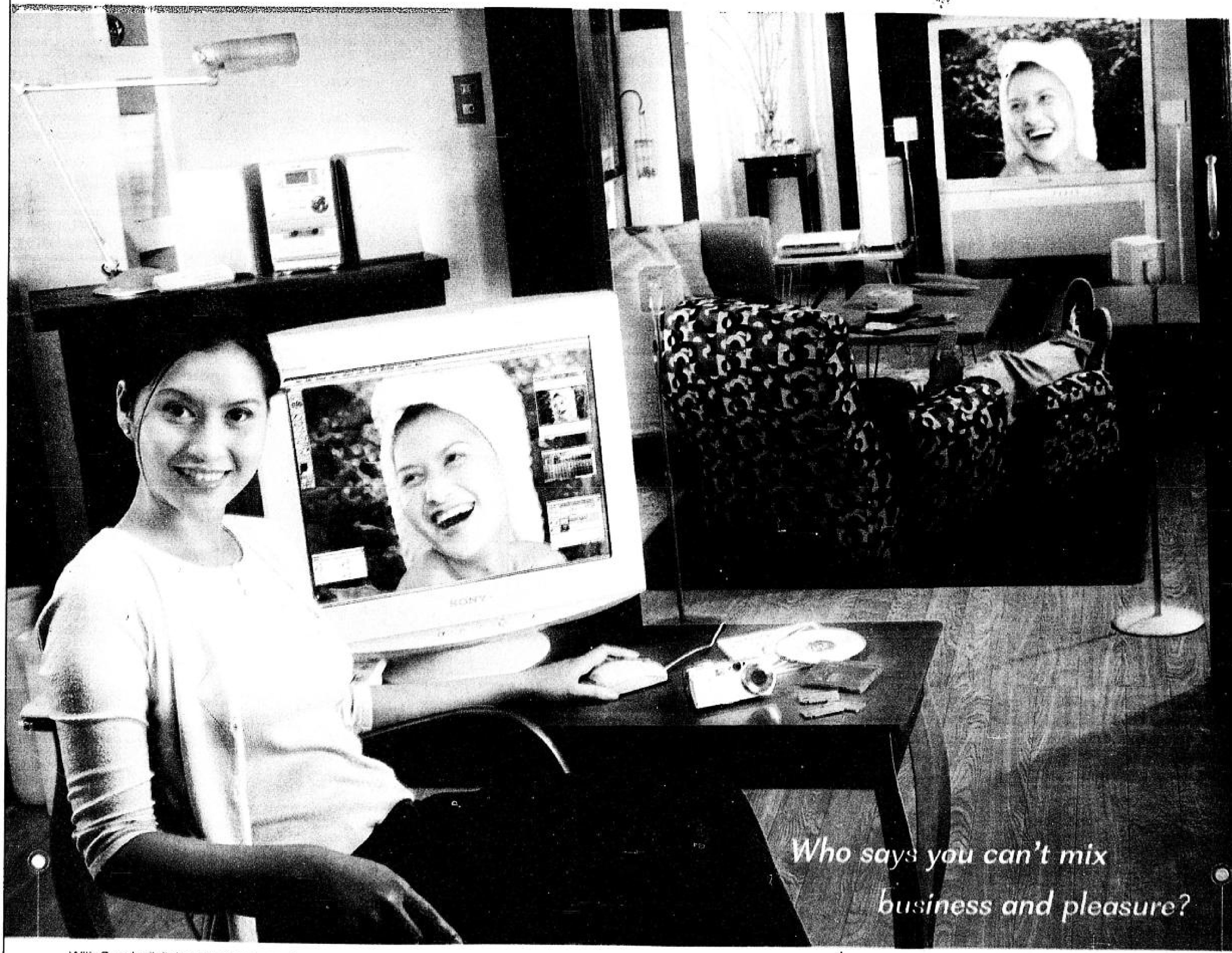
Roxas was apparently peeved by the continued attacks by Allengoal on his alleged bias against the trading firm, which had already signed a previous lease agreement with Hottick-Renong last year.

Roxas said that despite the DTI's active involvement in the search for an NSC investor, this was strictly a private affair with the creditor-banks on a position of strength.

He said the government merely wanted to break the standoff and that it was ready to have its 12-percent stake in the bankrupt firm reduced to zero. "When we entered into the fray, the case was already sinking in a legal quicksand," Roxas said.

After getting the feuding parties to go back on the same table and review the offer sheets from 3 investors, Roxas said the DTI's job was done and the major stockholders have to take the lead in resolving the issue soon.

Roxas said he expected the evaluation committee composed of the creditor-banks, Hottick-Renong, the DTI and NSC to meet with the prospective investors for further clarification on their proposals.



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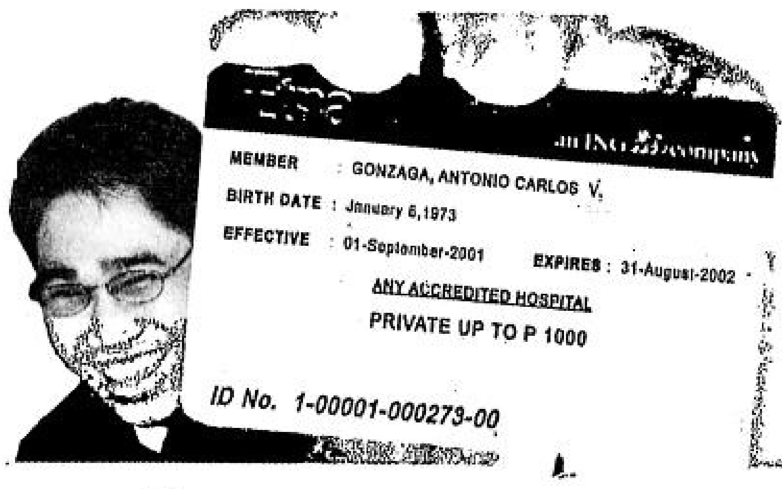

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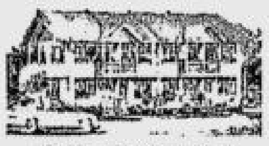

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The Board of Directors of **RASHID HUSSAIN SECURITIES (PHILIPPINES.), INC. ("RHSP")** wishes to announce that upon meeting all regulatory requirements, RHSP will voluntarily cease its operations effective from the close of business on December 10, 2001.

RHSP is a wholly owned subsidiary of **RHB Capital (Jersey) Limited** which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of **RHB Capital Berhad** in Malaysia. The decision to cease the operations of RHSP was taken as part of the RHB Capital Group's efforts to reorganize its business strategies in relation to its stockbroking operations in the ASEAN region.

All clients of RHSP have been formally notified of the above and are requested to contact RHSP's office as set out below immediately with regard to their existing accounts and to establish alternative trading arrangements with other stockbrokers.

RASHID HUSSAIN SECURITIES (PHILIPPINES.), INC.
33/F Rufino Pacific Tower
6784 Ayala Avenue, 1226 Makati City
Telephone No. : 811-0855
Fax No. : 811-0866

RHSP has also formally appointed **AB CAPITAL SECURITIES, INC. (ABCSI)** as its successor broker whose role would be to take custody of all unclaimed shares and cash, if any, remaining in the accounts of RHSP's clients after RHSP ceases its operations. ABCSI may be contacted at the following address:

AB CAPITAL SECURITIES, INC.
3/F AsianBank Center, 328 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue
Salcedo Village, Makati City 1200
Telephone No. : 819-3151
Fax No. : 810-3797

Date: December 1, 2001

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila
Tel. No. 527-4873, 527-4892 & 527-4880 to 82

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GENCO 1 01-013 (PB)

DATE OF BIDDING — DECEMBER 14, 2001

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0110-028	15 boxes Fastener, for heavy duty conveyor belts, std. stainless steel + carbon steel staples, packing 1 box containing 10 strips x 200 mm/strip good to splice 1 m belt width, TITAN IR No. 26, PN T10010626B and 10 pcs. Flexible Armoured Stainless Steel Connecting Pin, 7.0 mm dia, for 1400 mm belt width, PN AXE607011400, Manufactured by GORO
0110-029	8 pcs., Spring, square end ground enclosed in natural rubber, rod size 20 mm, free length 432 mm, no. of coils 8
0110-030	150 m², Supply of labor, material, installation, tools, equipment and technical supervision for the application of Polyurethane Waterproofing System for Fuel Laboratory Roofdeck at BCFTPP
0110-032-TES	1 lot, Resistor, Thyristor, Protistor, Transducer, Fan Motor, Ammeter, Voltmeter, Coil, Switch, Annunciator, Module Card and Horn for annunciator
0110-044-TES	6 kits, Eddy Current Clutch to VFD Convertion Kit and 196 NT MPC K1 & K7 with hinge panel Retrofit Kit, Gravimetric Coal Feeder Microprocessor/Controller 196 NT Control System, Manufactured by Stock Equipment Co.
0111-004	1 lot, Spare bearings for Turbine, Water Treatment and Ash Handling Equipment, consisting of 28 items
0111-005	1 lot, Spares for MIPREG 600c digital governors of hydraulic turbines, Manufactured by VA Tech VOEST MCE
0111-006	24 pcs., Flexible Connection, copper, 13.8 KV/1700 & 5500 A system, Manufactured by Moser-Glaser & Co.
0111-011	2 jobs, Supply of labor services, materials, consumables, supervision, expertise and provision of tools/equipment for hauling and transport Fuel Oil from BTPP to BCFTTP & Diesel from BTPP to BCCPP
0111-012	1 unit, Notebook Computer, Intel Mobile Pentium III Speed Step Technology, 800 MHz (min.) including accessories
0111-027-TES	1 lot, Fastrack Vibration Analyzer Accessories, Manufactured by Entek RD International
0111-028-TES	1 lot, Datapac 1500 Vibration Analyzer Accessories, Manufactured by Entek IRD International
0111-029	1 set, Nutsplitters, Hydraulic, capable of splitting 13 mm up to 75 mm of various sizes, complete with pressure hoses, fittings and other accessories
0111-030-TES	350 MT, Supply, hauling/handling, storage and delivery of Liquid Caustic Soda, rayon grade, for approx. six-month open contract tentatively from January 1 to June 30, 2002
0111-031-TES	350 MT, Supply, storage and delivery of Hydrochloric Acid, technical grade, for approx. six-month open contract tentatively from January 1 to June 30, 2002
0111-058	1 lot, Various Medicines, consisting of 25 items
0109-009-TES	4 units, Heavy Duty Industrial Exhaust Fans, propeller type, 36" blade dia., no. of blades 4, capacity 13,000 ft.³ of air/min., motor 480 VAC, 3-phase, 60 Hz including accessories

Bid documents will be available to accredited suppliers starting **December 3, 2001** and may be secured from Administration Division during working days from 9:00 AM -- 4:00 PM upon payment of P25.00 for ONE ENVELOPE SYSTEM and P 50.00 for TWO ENVELOPE SYSTEM.

Bids must be in triplicate and shall be accompanied by Bidder's Bond equivalent to 5% of the total bid price either in Cash, Manager's Check, Irrevocable LC, Bank Draft/Guarantee or Surety Bond from GSIS Insurance Commission.

The corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality contained therein and accept the bids considered most advantageous to the corporation.

(Sgd.) **LORNA T. DY**
Manager
Professional Services Department

(PDI -- Dec. 1, 2001)

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3. PRC License
4. Picture page from Passport
5. Board Exam Rating
6. Transcript of Records
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MACHINE TOOLS; REOMIE HOLLAND SURPLUS SPARE PARTS; BAGGAGE SCANNER; VEHICLE; FORK LIFTS; OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT; HOUSEHOLD GOODS; MISCELLANEOUS; ETC.
In over 600 lots inc.

MACHINE TOOLS - KRV 3000 Turret Milling Machine, RAMBO Turret Milling Machine; TAYLOR HOBSON Pantograph Machine Model K; ADCOCK & SHIPLEY Model 2E Universal Milling Machine; DEAN SMITH & GRACE Type 1709 Straight Bed Lathe; DEAN SMITH & GRACE Type 17T Straight Bed Toolroom Lathe; GF Screwing Machine; ELLIOT Sturdmil 1500 Vertical Milling Machine; WEBSTER & BENNETH Vertical Boring Machine; OM Vertical Boring Machine; Diplomatic Lathe Machine; JUNG Surface Grinder Machine; Pedestal Drills; INGERSOLL RAND Rotary Air Compressor; SULLAIR Model 300-Of-Aircompressor; RES Vertical Bandsaw; NOVA Pipe Cutter Machine; ATOS Hydraulic Puncher; Manual Press Machine; TRAINO Transisturzzato Mig Welders; OXY Mig Weld; AS/System Mig Weld, IDEAL 250 Arc Welder; DAIDEN AC Arc Welders; Circular Saw; Portable Sanders; Unused 202 Piece Tool Sets; Angle Grinders; RELIANT Fusing Machine; TREVIL 20000 Form Finisher; Jack Press; etc.

REOMIE HOLLAND SURPLUS SPARE PARTS - Brake Drums Hub Assy; Differentials; Steering Shafts; Propeller Shafts; TANDEMS Red Rear Axles; Shock Absorbers; Hydraulic Cylinders; Transfer Case; Cable Hoses; Electric Hoist; Cup Bearings; Wire Cables; Fuel Hoses; Misc Tools; etc

BAGGAGE SCANNER - FISCAN XE-60120N Baggage X-Ray Inspection System

VEHICLE - MAZDA Aluminum Close Van

FORK LIFTS - HYSTER 1.5 Ton Capacity Battery Forklift HYSTER; 1.0 Ton Cap. Walk Behind Battery Forklift HYSTER; 1.0 Ton. Cap. Electric Truck

OFFICE FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT - Office Tables; Steel Filing Cabinets; Safety Vault; Computer Table; Clerical Swivel Chairs; Notice Boards; Manual Typewriters; Asstd. Printers & Monitors; Facsimiles Machines; etc.

HOUSEHOLD GOODS - YAMAHA LOWREY Electric Organ; Rattan Sala Sets; Center Table, King Size Bed Mattress w/ Frame; Monobloc; Chairs; Attache Case; Sandals, Hand Drier, Personal Fan, Rechargeable Lantern; Unused RTW, Socks; Shoes; etc

MISCELLANEOUS - Antique Original Victorian Red UK Telephone Box; All Stainless Food Counter; Large Stainless Steel Wash Station; CLARK Stainless Sink; SALVA S.S. Electric Oven, Stainless Hood, Food Mixer, Asstd. Stainless Steel Basins; BELSHAW Oil Filtering Pumps; Stainless Riveter Machine; Stainless Steel Rack System, SANYO Food Chillers; Light Fixtures; Large Qty. Of Asstd. Unused Tires; Diesel Motor Oils; Fluids; Filter Elements; Radiator Hoses; V-Belts; Batteries; Tire Rims; Transformer; Hydraulic Pump; Tamping Hammers; Electric Motors; Fire Extinguishers; Cylinder Tanks; Electrical Boxes; Blowers; Carpet Floor Tile; etc.

AT:HENRY BUTCHER AUCTION CENTER
Bldg. #7 VRCC Road, Veterans Center, Taguig, Metro Manila
ON: Tuesday, 04th December 2001 at 10:30am Prompt
ON VIEW: Monday, 03rd December 2001, 9:00am - 5:00pm
REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT: Php20,000 (Upon Registration)

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www.henrybutcher.com

ADHOC COMMITTEE FOR PICC PROJECTS

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested contractors to apply for pre-qualification/eligibility and if later found eligible/qualified, to bid for the project described below:

Project Title : Refurbishing of Swivel/Arm Chair - PICC Plenary Hall
Scope of Work : Work includes furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, services and other incidentals require to perform refurbishing of swivel/arm chair with loose seat cushion such as; (a) reupholstery with new fabric, including foam reinforcement following mechanism and (d) other works necessary to complete the project existing design; (b) repolishing of steel base - satin finish; (c) repair and oiling of swivel mechanism and (d) other works necessary to complete the project.
Project Location : PICC Complex, Pasay City
Approved Budget : Seven Million Eight Hundred Sixty Six Thousand Pesos (P 7,866,000.00)
Source of Funding : Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria)
Contractor's Experience in Similar Project : Contractor's Experience in Similar Project : Has been a furniture contractor for the past ten (10) years specializing in the fabrication, repair/refurbishing of upholstered seating and has completed at least three (3) projects of similar nature or greater complexity for the past seven (7) years each costing not less than four hundred thousand pesos (P 400,000.00). The contractor must have a warehouse/workshop with minimum storage area of 1,000 sq.mtr.
Credit Line/Cash Deposit Certificate Req't : Seven Hundred Eighty Six Thousand Six Hundred (P786,600.00)
Prequalification / Eligibility Statement Forms
Cost of Forms : Two Hundred Pesos per set (P 200.00/set)
Date and Time of Issuance : Dec. 03 to 17, 2001 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility / Statement Documents : AHCPP Secretariat Rm 204 (Tel No. 524-7011 loc 3143) 2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex A. Mabini corner P. Ocampo (former V. Cruz) Streets, Manila
Deadline of Submission : December 21, 2001 4:00 pm
Notice of Eligibility / Ineligibility
Date and Time of Issuance : January 17, 2002 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Place of Issuance : AHCPP Secretariat Rm 204
Bid / Tender Documents : Shall be issued only to eligible/prequalified contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.
Cost of Documents / Place of Issuance : Five Hundred Pesos per set (P 500.00/set) AHCPP Secretariat Rm 204
Date and Time of Issuance : January 21, 2002 / 9:30 am to 12:00 nn & 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Pre-bid Conference
Date and Time : January 21, 2002 9:30 am
Venue : BMD Conference Room / 2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex
Submission and Opening of Bids
Deadline/Venue of Submission : January 29, 2002 / 9:00 am to 10:00 am / AHCPP Secretariat Room 204

Date, Time and Venue of Issuance of Bid Documents, Pre-Bid Conference and Deadline of Submission/ Opening of Bids shall be confirmed in the Notice of Eligibility.

Guidelines stipulated in the provisions of Executive Order No. 262 Series of 2000 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, as amended and other applicable rules & regulations shall apply relative to pre-qualification/eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and awards of contract.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP.

Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does in guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) Vicente B. Valdepeñas, Jr.
Chairman

(Sgd.) Juan Quintos, Jr.
Co-Chairman

(PDI--Dec. 1 & 15, 2001)

PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY

Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City Tel. no.: 928-4501 to 09
Cable Address "Philcoa" P.O. Box 3386, Manila

INVITATION TO BID

The PHILIPPINE COCONUT AUTHORITY (PCA) invites licensed Security Agencies to participate in the bidding to provide security services for the following offices:

1)	Region IV-A Office, Lucena City	6 Guards
2)	Albay Research Center and Region V Office	12 Guards
3)	Central Office, Diliman, Quezon City	20 Guards
4)	Zamboanga Research Center Zamboanga City	22 Guards
5)	CETC/DRC/Region	24 Guards
6)	Coconut Seed Production Center Aroman, Carmen, North Cotabato	34 Guards

A complete set of Bid/Tender Documents can be secured from the Office of the Deputy Administrator for Corporate Services Branch, 7th Floor, PCA R & D Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon the payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00).

Bids shall be opened at 2:00 p.m. on **19 December 2001** at the 7th floor, Viewing Room, Office of the Administrator, PCA R & D Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. A Pre-bidding Conference shall be held at the same venue on **December 17, 2001** at 10:00 A.M.

PCA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality in the bids received or accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to the PCA.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. DANIEL M. CLETO**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--Dec. 1, 6 & 11, 2001)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NEWLY ESTABLISHED COMPANY ENGAGED IN IMPORTATION IS IN NEED OF THE FOLLOWING:
(Salary: P8,000-P12,000) with PART-TIME

1. **Telemarketing/ Telephone Coordinator**
   With good presentation skills/ Experience not required
2. **Office Work**
   With or without experience
3. **Marketing Executive**
   With good presentation skills

Full Time: 8AM - 5PM/
Part Time: 9-12:30/1:30-6:00 and 6:30-8:30

Interested Parties Call:
892-3031, 892-3003, 892-3202
Address: Unit 2411 Herrera Tower
Herrera Street, Salcedo Village
Makati City

MALE/FEMALE

Do you have a computer with Internet and can send E-mail in province Pls E-mail us for income unit-edsystems@pacific.net

GRANTS 4 BSNSS, NGO, expt, Impt, Scholarships etc. (035)225-4870 / (0919)8559630

★Ofc Staff 9134470Paulo★

OFC STAFF 9328082 DAN

PHARMACIST PREF SUCAT RESDNT 8253245 JELLEN

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

SEMINAR ON IRIDOLOGY/REFLEXOLOGY TEL 7330443/09174051539

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

BAZAAR-MALL SPACES 4 RENT 633-9662 ★ 633-9295

EARN & TRAVEL 09196165084

EARN & TRAVEL 09197772986

Earn Big from your monthly utility bills such as: Electric, Water, Phone, Cable & etc. Call 931-4663

EARN FR HOME 8531008/09178311728

FREE SEMINAR ON OFFSHORE BANKING & DEBIT CARD TEXT ALLAN 09174661122

Mall Bazaar 09174510626

PUBLIC NOTICES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GLOBAL MARKET OPPORTUNITY
We are seeking an entrepreneur to join us and represent Philippines exclusively in the provision of business services. Please send an e-mail with your contact information to worldoffice@targetlinknet.com for more details.

Globe11% Smart11.5% min.100pcs A-K Video 1208 Masangkay Sta. Cruz Video-Box 687D J.Abad Santos St., Little Baguio, S.J. near Home Cable

Heaven's Dew
Purified w/ water system franchising & installation of water refilling station at Low Low prices Tel. (046) 502-2379; 0917-4941278 / 0910-6774847

RTW 4 Tiange Bazar3738821

WANTED
Wholesaler & Retailer
Tel. 8202777/09198669171

WE BUY LANDBANK BOND
Agrarian Reform 10-Yr. Bond 643-5629; 0917-7922363 Ver

Xmas Stall P5T
Dec. 1 - 21, Indoor Bazaar Dec. 22- June P3T/mo Only Super Tiangge, East Ave (across LTO) QC T-9257212 9257365 Cel 09178480612

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given for the loss of Manila Polo Club Certificate No. 421 issued by Manila Polo Club, Inc. in favor of Eugenio Lopez, Jr. dated Sept. 1, 1959.
(PDI-11/24, 12/1, & 8, 2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

Visit us at
JOBMarket ONLINE
www.jobmarketonline.com

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

November 28, 2001

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites duly licensed security services to Apply For Eligibility And To Bid for the security service of POEA for the Calendar Year 2002.

BUDGET

- Source Year 2002 MOOE
- Amount PhP 6,237,312.00

ELIGIBILITY SCREENING

- Eligibility Requirements Obtained from : BAC Secretariat (c/o Leonel P. Labrador, telephone no. 7221166, 5/F POEA Building, Ortigas Avenue corner EDSA, Mandaluyong City
- Non-refundable Fee : One Hundred Pesos (PhP 100) in Cash
- Period of Availment : **December 03-07, 2001**
- Submission of Eligibility Statement : To the BAC Secretariat not later than 5 o'clock in the afternoon of **December 14, 2001**

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS/BID DOCUMENTS FOR ELIGIBLE BIDDERS

- Obtained from : BAC Secretariat
- Period of Availment : **December 17** to **December 19, 2001**

PRE-BID CONFERENCE

- Date / Time : **December 27, 2001**, 10:00 AM
- Place : Conference Room of DA Management Services, 5/F POEA Building, Ortigas Avenue, corner EDSA, Mandaluyong City

SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS

- Two (02) sealed envelopes with the name of the contract to be bid, the name of bidder in capital letters, addressed to the BAC, and marked "Do not open until January 10, 2002.
- Deadline of Submission : **January 10, 2002**, 2:30 PM
- Submitted to : BAC Secretariat
- Opening of Bids : **January 10, 2002**, 2:30 PM
- Place : Conference Room of DA for Management Services 5/F POEA Building, Ortigas Avenue, corner EDSA, Mandaluyong City

APPLICABLE LAW / RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Executive Order No. 262 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations

The BAC, POEA reserves the right to reject any or all bids and/or part thereof without offering any reason, to waive any required formality or defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

The POEA assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss incurred in the preparation and submission of the eligibility statements and bid, and it does not guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **CAROLINA G. DE LEON**
Director II
Officer-In-Charge
Management Services

(PDI -- Dec. 1 & 2, 2001)

Make a career online
www.jobmarketonline.com

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that the following
Application Forms for Life Insurance of MetLife Philippines, Inc. (MetLife Philippines)
were reported lost on November 15, 2001:

Traditional Policy Application Form Nos.:

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0009
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Any transaction entered with the Company using the above application forms will not be honored.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is to inform the public that the following
Application Forms for Life Insurance of MetLife Philippines, Inc.
(MetLife Philippines) were reported lost on November 15, 2001:

Universal Life Policy Application Form Nos.:

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000089
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000102
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Any transaction entered with the Company using the above application forms will not be honored.

Reports dash quick US recovery hopes

WASHINGTON—There are a few bright spots in the recession-hit US economy, reports released on Thursday showed, but hopes of any quick recovery were dashed as an increasing number of Americans signed up for jobless benefits.

Orders for durable goods posted the biggest rise on record in October and sales of new homes climbed for a second straight month in a row, providing some hope that parts of the economy are making a comeback after grinding to a halt following the Sept. 11 attacks.

However, the good news was overshadowed by jobless claims, which jumped sharply in the latest week, indicating it is still too soon to say the economy is in recovery.

"I think celebration is premature," said Sung Won Sohn, chief economist at Wells Fargo. "The economy is not on a solid footing yet. The labor market is clearly not improving."

Thursday's data follows a round of gloomy reports, which have dampened recovery hopes after better-than-expected post-Thanksgiving holiday sales prompted US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill to declare the economy is in a "recovery phase".

On Monday, a panel of economists that officially dates US business cycles decided the economy has been in a recession since March. On Tuesday the Conference Board, a private research group, shocked markets with consumer confidence data that was weaker than expected. Then on Wednesday the Federal Reserve painted a bleak economic picture around the country, saying conditions remained sluggish in late October and early November.

The dollar and the stock market showed mixed reaction to Thursday's reports, with fears of a near collapse of energy trader Enron Corp. appearing to overshadow news about the overall economy.

The number of workers filing initial jobless claims for the week ended Nov. 24, rose 54,000 to 488,000, the Labor Department reported. That was well above the 448,000 claims economists in a Reuters poll were expecting for the week—one which would typically see light filings because of the Thanksgiving holiday.

The number of so-called continued claims rose by 301,000 to 4.02 million for the week ended Nov. 17, the biggest one-week jump in 27 years. The number of continued claims was at its highest level since Dec. 25, 1982, when it hit 3.82 million.

"Until we seen some convincing signs the rate of job losses has settled down, you have to be concerned about consumer spending going forward. If you are concerned about consumer spending it is hard to talk about recovery," said Anne Parker Mills, senior economist at Brown Brothers Harriman in New York.

In a separate report, the Commerce Department said the value of new orders for costly durable goods last month rose 12.8 percent to $184.8 billion, led by huge increases in orders for aircraft and defense capital goods. This was the largest gain since the Commerce Department began records in March 1992 and far exceeded analyst expectations of a 2.1 percent gain.

Economists said they believed the overall durables orders figure was boosted when aircraft maker Lockheed Martin booked some of a $19 billion initial-production contract for the Joint Strike Fighter aircraft for the US military.

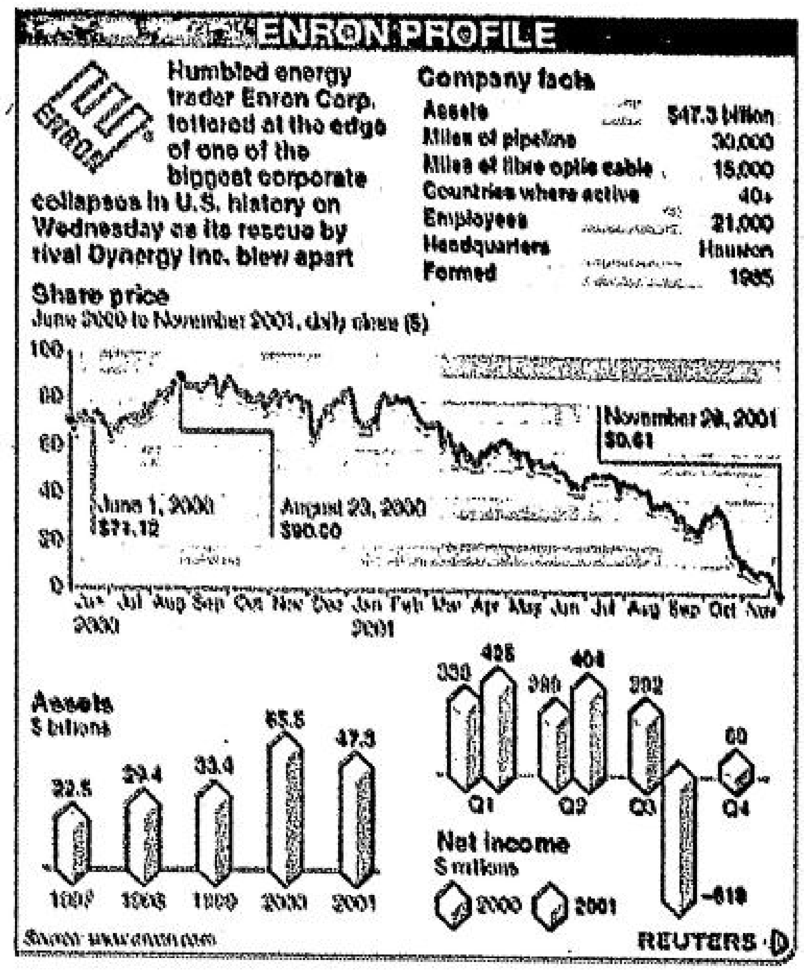
The Commerce Department also reported that sales of new US homes rose 0.2 percent to an annual rate of 880,000 units last month, also better than expectations.

The data will be taken into account by the Federal Reserve's policy-making committee at its next meeting on Dec. 11. Many economists are expecting the central bank to cut rates a further quarter percentage point at that meeting.

This view was given extra backing this week from Fed Governor Laurence Mayer, who said it would be a "misguided" tactic for the Fed to sit back and relax just yet.

The Fed has already cut interest rates 10 times this year in an attempt to reinvigorate the economy. Three of those cuts have come after the Sept. 11 attacks. *Reuters*

ENRON PROFILE



Humbled energy trader Enron Corp. tottered at the edge of one of the biggest corporate collapses in U.S. history on Wednesday as its rescue by rival Dynergy Inc. blew apart

Company facts

Assets	$47.3 billion
Miles of pipeline	30,000
Miles of fibre optic cable	15,000
Countries where active	40+
Employees	21,000
Headquarters	Houston
Formed	1985

Source: www.enron.com

REUTERS

U.N. REPORT

Poverty true cost of world's downturn

BANGKOK—The global economic slowdown is expected to push millions more people into poverty, making it imperative that Asia-Pacific countries remain committed to social and economic reforms, a UN report said Friday.

The inaugural mid-term economic report by the Bangkok-based United Nation's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Escap) described the current slump as the "first truly global downturn since the Second World War." Worst affected in Asia would be countries with a high dependence on exports to the United States, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea.

The downturn could lead to cuts in government spending on health, education and social security in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, putting many people below the poverty line, warned the report compiled by 14 regional economists.

A World Bank report published in October estimated the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks could push another 10 million people into poverty in 2002, especially in those countries reliant on tourism and export revenue.

Escap said developing countries in the region that relied on remittances from overseas foreign labor, such as the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam, could also struggle as nations tightened work visas and sent some foreign workers home.

As a result of the downturn, the United Nations Millennium Declaration's goal of halving poverty by 2015 would be unattainable in some countries.

But Escap urged Asia-Pacific countries to remain committed to their economic and social reforms, including those agreed following the 1997 financial crisis.

"Major policy initiatives at the national, regional and international levels are required," the report said.

"Well-targeted state spending—with an emphasis on quality rather than quantity—should be initiated, particularly with a view to fighting poverty. Spending on infrastructure, especially in rural areas, is a route that governments could take that would improve medium-term competitiveness," it added.

On the regional level, Escap urged Asia-Pacific countries to focus on growth to offset the downturn in the rest of world. The more developed countries in the region should open their markets to developing neighbors and intra-regional trade should be increased.

Internationally, the International Monetary Fund should speed up disbursements to small and developing economies while "paying greater attention to the economic conditions of individual countries." *AFP*

ANTI-WTO demonstrators attempt to cover their faces from news cameras as they march in downtown Seattle on Thursday to mark the anniversary of massive protests at the World Trade Organization there a year earlier. Following what they described as a successful round of talks in Qatar in 2001, WTO representatives said they had moved beyond the 1999 protests that derailed them in Seattle. Those who did the derailing beg to differ. AP

Record jobless rate adds to Japan's blues

TOKYO—Japan was hit by another set of dismal data on Friday with its jobless rate rising to a record 5.4 percent in October, yet more bad news for policymakers desperate to keep the giant economy afloat.

The key index for consumer prices slid for the 25th straight month, reflecting weak consumption and an appetite for cheaper imported goods, while housing starts and construction orders also dipped in October, government data showed.

Data showed spending by wage-earning households rose a real 1.6 percent in October from a year earlier, the first rise in seven months, but the government said the gain was due to special factors such as the timing of school payments.

While evidence of sluggishness in the world's second biggest economy is nothing new, the politically sensitive jobless figure highlights the challenges facing Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who has pledged painful but vital reforms.

"The employment situation is severe. The 5.4-percent jobless rate is harsh," Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa said.

The unemployment rate among men surged to 5.8 percent in October from 5.4 percent in September as full-time, middle-aged workers lost jobs in an economy rife with bankruptcies and corporate restructuring.

GDP figures to be released next week are almost certain to show that Japan has joined the United States in recession.

Overall, the number of unemployed rose for the seventh straight month to 3.52 million. This was 380,000 more than in October last year, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Post and Telecommunications said.

"The jobless rate could eventually rise to near 6 percent. I think the worsening trend will continue until the middle of next fiscal year (that starts in April)," said Tsurukazu Nakamura, economist at Fuji Research Institute.

Unemployment has become a major headache for policymakers as Koizumi strives to forge ahead with planned structural reforms that promise yet more bankruptcies and job losses.

The government allocated some 550 billion yen ($4.44 billion) for job steps in a recently enacted extra budget for the current fiscal year.

"In the near term, we must focus on implementing job safety net measures. But over the longer term, we must take steps to strengthen the economy and create jobs," said Trade Minister Takeo Hiranuma.

"Should current economic conditions persist, there is a possibility of a further rise (in the jobless rate)," he added.

Japan, once known for its lifetime employment system, had long enjoyed lower jobless rates than other industrialized countries, but more people have lost jobs in recent years as firms adopt aggressive restructuring plans. Unemployment here is now running neck-and-neck with that in the United States, which also reported a rise to 5.4 percent in October joblessness.

Credit research firm Tokyo Shoko Research said 1,804 companies went bankrupt in October, affecting 19,550 workers.

H. Kong seen in recession with Q3 data

HONG KONG—It may be no secret to anyone who has lost a job, taken a pay cut or watched the value of their home slide, but Hong Kong is expected to confirm on Friday what everyone already suspects: the territory has slipped into recession.

Economists polled by Reuters on average expect third-quarter data to show the economy contracted 2.07 percent in the quarter year on year. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, the concensus among economists making a projection is for a 1.2-percent fall.

The economy grew 0.5 percent in the second quarter year on year but contracted 1.7 percent on a quarter-on-quarter, seasonally adjusted basis. Another negative quarter-on-quarter figure would satisfy the common definition of a recession.

And it's not the bottom yet.

"Trade figures indicate that exports were weak in the third quarter and private consumption also turned very weak. And we expect that will affect investment sentiment in the fourth quarter, leading to a very soft number for the year," said Vincent Kwan, senior economic research manager at Hang Seng Bank.

The consensus forecast is for a 2.88-percent year-on-year decline in the fourth quarter. For the full year, economists are looking for GDP to contract by 0.64 percent. *Reuters*

China set on pumping economy

BEIJING—China has decided to pour even more money into its economy next year in order to achieve growth, although some economists are warning this is not the right way to solve the country's problems.

Key decision makers, including President Jiang Zemin, agreed at a three-day conference this week to keep the 2002 growth target at 7 percent and extend a strategy of massive pump-priming into its fifth year, sources said.

"China will adopt even more aggressive policies next year to boost economic growth," said Bob Zhang, an economist with BNP Paribas Peregrine Securities in Beijing.

"It needs relatively high growth to deal with problems such as widening income disparities and mounting unemployment, but a 7-percent growth will not be easy to achieve," he said.

China's target for this year was also 7 percent, and it appears likely to just reach it, although growth has slowed steadily from 8.1 percent posted in the first quarter to 7 percent in the third.

To achieve next year's objective despite the threat of slowing export growth, China plans to boost its spending on infrastructure projects and other areas such as social security, sources said. *AFP*

Some jobs helping Americans dodge pains of economic recession

CHICAGO—Although thousands of Americans have joined the unemployment lines during the US economic downturn, Robert Melko is confident about his job security.

Melko is the owner of Bishop Plumbing, located in the Chicago suburb of Des Plaines, Illinois. Bishop, which Melko's family has owned for 80 years, receives its bread and butter from the sort of jobs that often cannot be postponed.

"When you've got sewage backing up into your house, or you've got water leaking into the house, you've got to get it fixed, the economy is irrelevant. This is a priority," Melko said.

Melko is one of the lucky few who consider themselves largely recession-proof, unaffected for the most part by dips in the economy.

Officially in recession

On Monday, the United States was officially declared to be in a recession.

A panel of economists that officially dates US recessions announced the economy slid into recession in March. The National Bureau of Economic Research said while economic activity had been slowing before Sept. 11, the attacks had aggravated the situation.

The Sept. 11 attacks that killed thousands and crippled New York's financial district forced a further unraveling of an already weakening US labor market. In October, the unemployment rate rose to 5.4 percent, its highest level since December 1996.

Several industries were suffering before Sept. 11 and the manufacturing sector had been in recession for many months by then. Others, such as airlines and certain areas of financial services, were debilitated by the attacks and companies have let go thousands of workers in their aftermath.

Yet some businesses are like Melko's, in that the goods or services they provide are indispensable. Those are the areas that weather a recession the best, said Chris Rupkey, senior financial economist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi.

"Those people tend to keep their jobs—people who do basic services for people," Rupkey said. "Anything that can be cut back is in a recession. (But) there are certain things that can't be cut back in a recession, like eating at home."

In fact, at the Jewel-Osco supermarket chain, a subsidiary of Idaho-based Albertson's Inc., grocery shoppers have been stocking up on items that would suggest they are making more home-cooked meals, said Karen Ramos, a spokesperson for the Midwest retailer. While Jewel has not seen an increase in overall sales at its 278 locations, consumers are turning away from fast-food items and more toward the basics.

"We're seeing more dinner preparation items being purchased, a little bit more meat, more produce," Ramos said, adding that the store normally sees the purchase of those types of items rise into Thanksgiving but that the shift in overall sales emerged shortly after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Not cutting into business

Ben Aceves, owner of Continental Stylists in downtown Chicago Loop area, has had a few brushes with the economic downturn. Several of her clients were laid off, but those who want to look kempt while pounding the pavement for work need to return to her on a regular basis, she said.

"I had a day where two or three guys told me that they lost their jobs, but they still come back and get their hair cut every four weeks, because they might be looking for a job right away," said Aceves, who charges her predominantly male clientele $20 for a haircut.

But like many workers who are not feeling a pinch during the economic pullback, she said her job has clear downsides. Aceves said hair stylists usually do not get health insurance or paid vacation.

Another drawback some recession-proof workers face is that their compensation increase often does not increase as much or as quickly as other professions, said Jeoff Hall, managing economist for North America at Thomson/IFR.

"They're not going to see their numbers or wages go up as high as some other industries," he said.

For Melko wages aren't the issue. He charges a premium when sending one of his 12 plumbers out on a holiday or late at night. But the unpredictable hours he and his employees work when answering service calls are a trade-off for their steady compensation during times of economic strife.

"The service end of the industry, even though it's the largest profit end of the industry, it's the toughest. Our hours are not 8 to 4:30 p.m.," he said. "Anybody can get a plumber from 8 to 5. Getting a plumber on Christmas Eve at 10 at night separates the men from the boys. Service—you have to provide service." *Reuters*

US economic downturn leaves office glut

SAN FRANCISCO—At the height of the Internet frenzy in 1999, landlord Ronaldo Cianciarulo cleared longtime tenants out of his landmark building in San Francisco's South of Market district and converted it to sleek offices that could attract high-rent, high-tech firms.

But for more than six months now, two of the three floors of the 210,000-square foot Baker Hamilton Building have stood empty, a casualty of the bust in technology investment that helped drag the US economy into recession.

Two years ago, South of Market with its abundance of converted warehouses was the hippest business address in the country for the Internet entrepreneurs at the epicenter of the New Economy.

But today the area, Soma in the local vernacular, is "a colossal blood bath" in the words of Jim Collins, a commercial real estate broker at Shorenstein Realty Services in San Francisco. The most common sight is a "For Lease" sign.

One of the most glaring signs of the weakening economy is a glut of commercial office space accumulating with alarming speed and dragging down prices in once-booming, high-tech markets like San Francisco, Seattle and Portland, Oregon.

"The effects in commercial real estate markets have been startling," Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco president Robert Parry said recently.

And empty office buildings are not the only symptom of the economic malaise in the western United States. Job losses are mounting, state tax revenues are plummeting and the attacks of Sept. 11 have made everything worse, pushing out the timeline for any recovery in the crucial high-tech industry.

"Things are getting worse every single month now," said Mary Daly, a San Francisco Fed economist. "We are expecting further declines in the information technology sector before we see a turnaround."

The San Francisco Fed, which monitors nine western states, says damage from the technology downturn is broadening out to affect transportation, warehousing, restaurants and other business travel services.

Parry said a third of the San Francisco Bay area economy depends on high tech and the number of people looking for work in the area has risen by 100,000 since the end of last year.

"The resulting losses in jobs and wealth have spilled over to other sectors and pulled the rug out from under the area's expansion," he said.

California, the world's sixth largest economy, has suffered disproportionately from the technology slump. It is also still reeling from a power crisis last year and faces the steepest one-year drop in tax revenues since World War II next year.

The attacks of Sept. 11 exacerbated the region's problems by hurting the tourism and travel industries, and denting business and consumer confidence.

But the strains are most evident in commercial real estate, particularly in areas like Soma with a high concentration of technology businesses.

Vacancy rates for office space in Soma at the southern tip of the city are running about 30 percent or even higher, far above the 14-percent rate for San Francisco as a whole, according to real estate firms that track such data. Those are the highest levels since the last recession in 1990-91.

At the end of 1999, there was virtually no office space available in the entire city. Lease rates are now about half of what they were at the peak in late 1999 and early last year, brokers said.

"Right now it's not about price. There is no demand, no willing buyer," Shorenstein's Collins said of the Soma area.

As the list of tech companies gone bust lengthens, many area buildings have suffered the same fate as Baker Hamilton.

In the early 1990s, Soma was almost entirely warehouses and light industry. Its airy, loft-like spaces attracted artists, musicians and dance troupes in droves.

But over the past five years, as landlords came to realize they could charge four or five times the rent to tech companies, the artists were driven out.

"Landlords saw the rents the dotcoms were willing to pay and started kicking old businesses out," said Charles Malet, executive vice president and leasing director at Shorenstein, which manages 6.5 million square feet of offices in the city.

As a result, a large community of viable businesses were forced out of their traditional homes and had to relocate outside the city, Malet said. They are not about to come back.

Between mid-1999 and early 2000, rents in Soma doubled, soaring as high as $90 a square foot per month in some areas. Landlords began acting like venture capitalists, evaluating the viability of potential renters' businesses and, in some cases, even asking for stakes in the companies they leased to. At its height, about 80 percent of Soma was taken up by high-tech firms.

Reuters

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People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

PLDT president heads Asian Multimedia Forum

PLDT president Manuel V. Pangilinan was recently appointed president of the Asian Multimedia Forum (AMF) during its 12th Plenary Meeting held recently at Brunei Darussalam hosted by Jabatan Telekom Brunei.

AMF is a non-profit organization promoting the acceptance and implementation of information technology services, applications and technologies in Asia. To develop e-communities in Asia where people with common interests or attributes get together and share or exchange information and experiences, AMF initiates an e-Community Development Program to help volunteers organize new communities on the Net as well as help existing communities.

In his letter of acceptance to director of telecommunications Jabatan Telekom Brunei Buntar Osman, Pangilinan expressed his determination to "accomplish his assignments of furthering the Forum's development with the help of the rest of the members."

PLDT is the leading telecommunications provider in the Philippines. Through its three principal business groups – fixed line, wireless and Internet and multimedia – PLDT offers a wide range of telecommunications services across the Philippines' most extensive fiber optic backbone and fixed line, cellular and satellite networks.

PLDT is listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE: TEL) and its American depositary shares are listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE:PHI) and the Pacific Exhange. PLDT has one of the largest market capitalizations among Philippine-listed companies.

ORACLE APPOINTS AZURE TECHNOLOGIES AS RP VAD

As part of its plan to gain a bigger share of the small and medium enterprise market, Oracle Systems Philippines has recently appointed Azure Technologies Philippines to be a local value-added distributor (VAD) for the company. Shown (from left) is Azure Tech Asean general CM Woon with Azure Tech Philippines channels manager Cathy Borja, Azure Tech Philippines general manager Leonardo Santos, Oracle System Philippines channels manager for technology business Raymond Remoquillo, Oracle System Philippines managing director Bernard Yu, Azure Tech Philippines group manager for business development, systems engineering and marketing Pamela Angeles-Flores and Oracle System Philippines director for channels and alliances Sonny Halili.

HONGKONG
CITY OF LIFE

'HAPPY FAMILIES GO TO EK AND HK'

The Formoso family from Cavite was adjudged the grand prize winner in the 'Happy Families Go to EK and HK' promo of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), Enchanted Kingdom, '5 and Up' and The Philippine Star. The Formosos, adventure-seekers who love visiting local destinations together, were chosen from among three finalist families out of more than 40 entries to win for themselves their first foreign trip together to Hong Kong. They will be staying at the deluxe Regal Riverside Hotel in Sha Tin and enjoy the family attractions, nature trips, shopping and good food in the City of Life. Shown is Ed Formoso (fourth from right) being awarded the prize by Rene Nieva (third from right), president of Perceptions, Philippine PR counsel to the HKTB. Also shown are (from left) Anniebon, Becca and Kara Formoso, Kathy Moran of The Philippine Star and Agay Llanera of '5 and Up'.

BITS & Clips

La Concordia High jubilee

RELIVE your high school days. Class 1951 (HS) of La Concordia College will have its Golden Jubilee celebration on Dec. 2 at the school campus. For details, call Minda at 563-2180 or Sofia at 455-3917.

Club Marinduqueño 10th year

CLUB Marinduqueño will celebrate its 10th Anniversary Ball and induction of officers on Dec. 2 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hall of Fame, Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila. Outgoing president Arsenio Tanco will turn over the presidency to newly elected president Captain Manuel Regio of Torrijos. The newly elected members of the board of trustees are General Santiago Aliño, Dr. Edgardo Paras, Albert Chua (Boac); Dr. Myrna Manguera Profeta, engineer Nestor Hapis (Mogpog), Macario Rodil, Dr. Mercy Revamonte-Esguerra, Dan Zulueta, lawyer Nancy Belarmino Tee (Sta. Cruz), Dr. Leo Gonzalez, engineer Noel Par, Captain Regio, Ross Yap (Buenavista), Ruddy Tan, and engineer Romy Motol. The new officers of the club are Gen. Aliño, VP-internal, Gonzalez, VP-external, Sandy Villamayor, secretary, engineer Lino Esguerra, treasurer, Alice Quinto, assistant treasurer, Robert Rejano, business manager, and Ruben Rejano, PRO. Marinduqueños are invited. Tickets are available at the entrance. For details, call Sandy Villamayor at 532-10-30, or Dr. Mercy Esguerra at 531-7575.

PREX national confab

ALL Parish Renewal Experience (PREX) graduates are invited to attend the 7th National PREX Convention on Jan. 4, 5 and 6 at the St. Louis University Gymnasium in Baguio City. The theme is "The Call to Morality". For particulars, call The Good Shepherd Parish at 939-4720 or 936-9349, or contact your parish PREX secretariat. Or fax at 430-8435, 461-3016. E-mail fairview@prex-napps.org, or visit www.prex-napps.org.

Bukas Palad concert

DON'T miss "A Christmas Praise" concert with the Bukas Palad Music Ministry and the Philippine Pops Orchestra under the baton of Gerard Salonga. The first show was held Nov. 30. The final shows will be today, Dec. 1, 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. at the Meralco Theater. Special guests include Karylle, Noel Cabangon, Tony Lambino, Jeff Arcilla, Ateneo Boys Choir, The Company, and Liza and Jose Mari Chan. Bukas Palad, the singing group founded by Ateneans Fr. Manoling Francisco, SJ, Norman Agatep and Jandi Arboleda, has popularized many original Filipino compositions sung at mass all over the country. The fundraising concert is for the benefit of the Ateneo Scholarship Fund and the Jesuit Volunteers Philippines. For tickets, call Jesuit Music Ministry at 426-5971 or 426-6001 local 5150.

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INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS "AS IS, WHERE IS"

DATE & TIME OF BIDDING : DECEMBER 12, 2001 AT 2:00 PM

The National Power Corporation, SLRC invites interested parties to bid on various unserviceable/scrap items listed below;

LOT#	Description of Unserviceable Item	Qty/Unit	Location	Min. Bid
1	One (1) lot approximately 527 metric tons of various scrap items composed as follows: 4 pcs. Stator assy., 7 pcs. 13.8kv Oil Circuit Breaker, 3 pcs spider of turbine bearing, 18 pcs. Disconnect switch connectors, 1 lot assorted cables, 4 pcs. Turbine runner w/ shafting, 1 lot circuit breaker, 4 pcs Rotor assy., 7 pcs. Oil circuit breaker accessories (steel boxes), 1 lot electrical panels, 5 pcs. Transformer bushing, 1 lot penstock including other items such as rebars, saddles, etc., 4 pcs. Spider of lower guide bearing, 16 pcs. Wicket gate, 4pcs. Governor oil pump, 2 pcs. Butterfly valves, 4 pcs. Turbine inside covers, 1 lot assorted cables, motor, 4 pcs. spider of lower guide bearing, 16 pcs. Potential transformer, 14 pcs. LA, 4 pcs. Air break switch, 3 pcs. Outside cover of turbine, 1 lot insulators, 126 pcs. Batteries-industrial, 13.8kv cable, assorted 1 lot, 2 sets spherical ring, 3 pcs. Labyrinth tank, 1 pc. Bottom liner, 1 pc. Facing plate, 24 pcs. Wicket gate, 2 sets stationary ring & sealing ring etc.	1 LOT	CALIRAYA HEP & KALAYAAN PSPP	P 2,361,000.00
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3	One (1) lot junked equipment composed of: 3.1 HinoTruck, w/boom, 1977, Plate# EAN-262 3.2 Back Hoe, Poclain, Model 1979	2 units	TGPP	P 205,000.00

Bid in the prescribed form shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope and shall be received until 12:00 noon of December 12, 2001 and be opened at exactly 2:00 PM. All bids must be submitted at NPC-SLRC Main Office, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna with the following:

1.) Bidder's Bond in the form of Cash, Manager's Check equivalent to 5% of the total bid price.
2.) Latest Income Tax Return and/or Financial Statement of the Company.

Additional information such as Request for Inspection and bid form may be obtained from SLRC Main Office with Telephone Nos. 520-82-13/520-82-29. Payment of prescribed form and other particulars is P50.00 per set which is not refundable.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waives formalities found therein and accept offers most advantageous to NPC.

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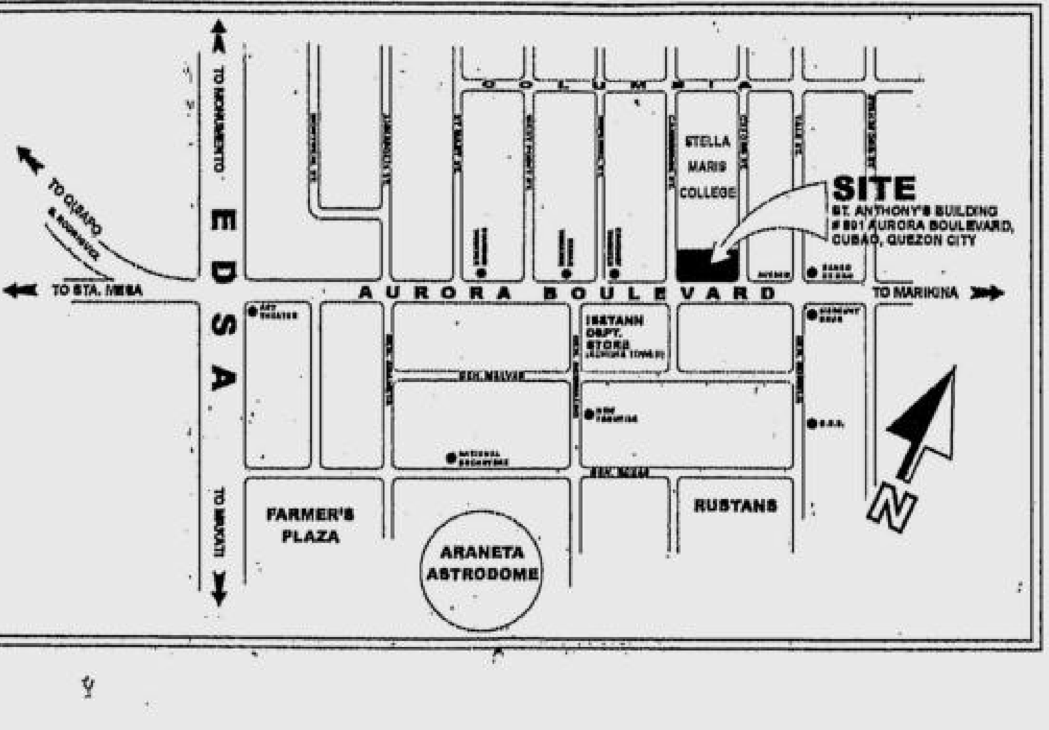

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this very reason
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guarantee that
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2 Cor. 5:4-5

We, the family of the late

BIENVENIDO "RENE" R. GOMEZ

Fondly remember him on the
3rd year since he joined Our Heavenly Father

Holy Masses will be offered tomórrow, **Sunday, 02 December 2001** at the following churches:

Immaculate Concepcion Church *Pasig City*	6:00 a.m.
Sta. Clara de Falcon *Caniogan, Pasig City*	6:00 a.m.
San Agustin Church *Palatiw, Pasig City*	6:00 a.m.
Sta. Rosa de Lima Church *Bagong Ilog, Pasig City*	6:00 a.m.
Holy Family Church *Bo. Capitolyo, Pasig City*	6:00 a.m.
Saint Francis of Assissi Church *Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City*	6:00 a.m.
St. John the Baptist Church *Taytay, Rizal*	6:00 a.m.
Christ the King Church *Greenmeadows, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Jose *Greenhills, San Juan*	6:00 a.m.
Santuario de San Antonio *Forbes Park, Makati City*	6:30 a.m.
University of Sto. Tomas Chapel *España, Manila*	6:00 a.m.

"The Lord will open to them the gate of paradise,
and they will return to the homeland
where there is no death, but only lasting joy."

We lovingly remember
our most beloved

J. EDWARD VILLALUNA HENSON

(December 1, 1999)
on his Second Death Anniversary

Holy Masses are being offered and celebrated today, December 1, 2001 at the following Churches:

Christ the King Parish, *Green Meadows Avenue* *Quezon City*	6:00 PM
St. Francis Church, *Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City*	6:00 PM
Nativity of Our Lady Parish, *Industrial Valley Subd.* *Marikina City*	6:00 PM
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine, *Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue* *New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 PM
St. Joseph Convent of Perpetual Adoration, *M. Hemady Avenue* *New Manila, Quezon City*	6:00 AM

The family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life;
Those who believe in Me will live,
even though they die; and those who
live and believe in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Atty. ROQUE E. EVIDENTE

Joined his Creator on Sunday, November 25, 2001, on the Feast of Christ the King, in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A. at the age of 89.

His beloved wife **Lolita**; children **Manuel** and **Marlene Diestro, Dolly** and **Danny Kochoa, Chita, Benny** and **Grace Herrera, Sister Socorro, D.C., Nuncie** and **Ver Pampliega, Dela** and **Nanding Yu, Joebalt** and **Vangie Isidto, Nanette** and **Rey Ramos, Doris** and **Joseph Thiel, Marissa** and **Spero Wallace, Mariter**; grandchildren; brothers, sisters, in-laws, relatives and friends requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will arrive in Iloilo City on December 6, 2001 at 3:45 P.M. and will lie in state at St. Joseph's Mortuary of St. Elizabeth's Cathedral, Jaro, Iloilo City. The remains will be transferred to Igbaras Parish Church on December 11, 2001 at 9:00 A.M. Interment will be on December 12, 2001 after the 9:00 A.M. Mass.

Angel De Leon Ong
"Ide"

Widow of the late **Esperanza San Juan Ong**

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 27, 2001
at the age of 91.

His bereaved children **Sonny** and **Chit, Cora** and **Vic, Boying** and **Fely, Medy** and **Omy, Connie** and **Mike, Egay** and **Ditas**; grandchildren **Geoffrey, Gerald, Ria, Jojo, James, Ghie, Oliver** and **May, Minnie, William, Margarita, Jayvee, Stephanie, Iris, Aaron, Ansue**; great grandson **Tristan**; relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Capitol Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Holy Mass will be offered daily at 7:00 p.m. Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque on Sunday, 2 December 2001 after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Jesus Ribero Asence
"Jesse"

Died in the Grace of our Lord in Bossier City, Louisiana, U.S.A. on November 16, 2001 at the age of 81.

He is survived by his children **Mila, Imelda, Vicky, Yoyie** and **Tony**; in-laws **Rod, Joey, Hubert, Bart** and **Rosario**; grandchildren **Pebbles, Mae-Ann, Geri, Cathy, Liz** and **Rose, Michelle** and **Carla**.

His remains arrived yesterday, 30th November 2001. A vigil will be held today, 1st of December 2001 at the Filinvest East Homes Chapel, Multi-Purpose Hall, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City, where the body will lie in state.

Interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park on Sunday, December 02, 2001, after the 8:30 a.m. Mass. We commend him to your prayers.

Ret. Col. MELECIO S. SEDANTES

of San Joaquin, Iloilo and Los Angeles, California
Peacefully joined his Creator on November 29, 2001
at the age of 86.

His bereaved wife **Dolores**; children **Dante** and **Ernestina Sedantes**, and **Salvador** and **Danela S. Escueta**; and grandchildren **Reydante, Anne Kristine** and **Danielle Pauline** request the pious reader to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.
His remains lie in state at Arlington East The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Ave., cor. Mercedes Ave., Pasig City.
Interment to be announced later.

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People, Events & Products

Aries B. Espinosa, Assistant Editor

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Informatics is international franchise of the year

INFORMATICS Philippines Holdings Inc. (IHPI) is one of this year's winners for the Franchise Excellence Awards. In a ceremony at the World Trade Center in Roxas Boulevard, the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA) has awarded IHPI's flagship school the prestigious International Master Franchise of the Year for the service category.

Following the announcement of the winners, Manuel Siggaoat, PFA president commented: "Informatics' franchise operations marked by its consistent sales growth, presence in key areas like the shopping malls and social involvement are what earned them the award. We also asked the IPO and DTI if Informatics has pending cases and it is commendable that in its seven years of franchise operations, Informatics retains its clean slate."

The selection of winners was based on the following criteria and its corresponding percentages: franchise program (25); sales and marketing (30); operations (20); reputation (15) and social responsibility (10). Siggaoat further added that Informatics' good ethical practices and solid reputation impressed the screening committee.

"We are proud to win this award," said Leo Riingen, Informatics president and CEO. "With this recognition, we are further inspired to produce more graduates to answer the demand for competent and highly skilled IT professionals. Through franchising we will bring much needed IT education to as many students as possible. We want to penetrate key cities in the country to make quality IT training and education available to as many Filipinos as possible."

Established in 1983, Informatics Group is a network of training and education companies operating in more than 400 centers in 33 countries. It has since emerged as the leader in providing IT training and education services in Asia and the Pacific, Middle East, Africa, Europe and South America.

Informatics came to the Philippines in 1993 to answer the growing demand for IT literate students and professionals. Informatics has been offering the most in-demand IT education and training courses certified and validated by NCC Education in UK and the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate. To date, Informatics Philippines has produced more than 200,000 graduates and is proud to be the most preferred IT training partner of top corporations.

BANTAY BATA 163
december 19-25, 2001
2:00 p.m. to 12:00 midnight
Konica FILM

PHOTO PROVIDER OF WORLD BAZAAR

Konica Film has been chosen as the official photo services provider of the World Bazaar Festival, the country's biggest international Christmas shopping exposition slated from Dec. 19 to 25 at the World Trade Center. Organized by the Worldbex Srrvices International (WSI) for the benefit of Bantay Bata 163 of ABS-CBN Foundation, this 7-day Christmas fair is a gathering of international traders and manufacturers who will offer their wares at low prices. Shown are WSI managing director Tintin Liboro (left) and Columbian Global Photo Sales Corp. assistant general manager Gilbert Tan (right) signing the memorandum of agreement, as (back row, from left) Columbia Global Photo Sales Corp. national sales and marketing manager Malu de Guzman, WSI vice president Edward Diamonon and Columbia Global Photo Sales Corp. sales and marketing manager for digital imaging division Joelyrose Tan look on.

JUPITER SYSTEMS VISITS SANYO DENKI

Jupiter Systems Inc (JSI) president Fermin Taruc (left) hears from Sanyo Denki assistant finance manager Danilo Hipolito how JSI's Eric software helped in their operations at the Subic Technopark. Looking on are Sanyo Denki accounting department manager Atsushi Suzuki and JSI account manager Marsha Gomez. Eric, or Enterprise Resource Information and Control, is a comprehensive software solution that addresses the financial, distribution, manufacturing, and personal management needs of companies. Filipino software firm JSI is a member of the iVantage group, while Sanyo Denki is the world leader in the manufacture of small precision motors, servo motors and systems.

Eastwood City CyberPark
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THE PHILIPPI S' PREMIER IT PARK

OFFICE SHOWROOM AT THE CYBERPARK

Megaworld Land Inc. recently signed a memorandum of agreement with CBS Inc., a leading provider of office furniture, which provides for CBS to put up a showroom at the Eastwood Cyberpark Corporation Building for its Bristol line of office furniture to present and prospective locators at the Eastwood city CyberPark. Shown during the agreement signing are (from left) Maricris Sarino, Eastwood's locators assistance center manager; Jericho Go, Megaworld Land vice president; Gerry Lim Bonhiong, CBS senior vice president for marketing; and Gerhard Bandiola, CBS country manager.

BOSCH TEAM JOINS SALES CONFERENCE

Robert Bosch Inc.'s Power Tool Sales Team recently joined the highly successful Bosch Asia Pacific Sales Conference held at Bali, Indonesia recently. The team was led by its managing director Guenther Diehl; division manager Jun Lu and marketing manager Nerissa Flores. Bosch, being the world's number one for Power Tools, outlined its sales and marketing thrust and strategies for the fast-growing and dynamic Asia-Pacific region for this year until next. The conference also served to unite the participating Bosch Power Tools team into expanding its market share and distribution network within the region.

RCPI INAUGURATION

Radio Communications of the Philippines (RCPI) inaugurated a new calling station at the ground floor of National Life Building along Ayala Avenue in Makati City. The station offers Western Union Money Transfer Service, domestic and international long distance, Internet browsing, as well as other convenient communications services. Shown (from left) are Eric Lala, RCPI Metro Manila operations director; Rey Go, RCPI chief financial officer; Gabby Paredes, RCPI chief executive officer; Menchie Orlina, director for the Philippines for Western Union; Eileen Roque, Regional Operations Manager for Western Union; Nando Roa, RCPI AVP marketing and corporate sales; and JJ delos Reyes, RCPI product manager for money transfer services.

CAP dominates pre-need industry in first half of 2001

PRE-NEED industry pioneer College Assurance Plan (CAP) and sister company Comprehensive Annuity Plans and Pension Corp. (CAP Pension) are still the undisputed leaders in the pre-need industry in terms of total gross sales and trust funds. According to the latest report of the Securities and Exchange Commission's Non-Traditional Securities and Instruments Department, the top three sellers of education plans from January to June 2001 were CAP with P2.6 billion, Berkley International Corp. with P1.4 billion and Philam Plans Inc. with P1.1 billion.

Meanwhile, the pension plan category's top three players from January to June 2001 were Philam Plans with P1.767 billion, CAP Pension with P1.523 billion and Pacific Plans Inc. with P1.520 billion.

To date, CAP and CAP Pension's combined trust funds now total P11.7 billion, still the biggest in the pre-need industry. The trust fund, which is the prime indicator of a pre-need company's strength and stability, is the amount set aside by the company to pay for maturing obligations.

These funds are deposited in banks such as Allied Bank, Bank of Commerce, Bank of the Phil. Islands (BPI), Citibank, Equitable PCI Bank, Metrobank and Unionbank.

Clips

Corso Marconi opens in Bacolod

IN LINE with its aggressive expansion plans, the Marconi Fashion Group (MFG) announced that it opens its Bacolod store today, Dec. 1. Corso Marconi Bacolod will be MFG's first in the Negros province. It will occupy 120 sqm filled with racks and shelves of quality Italian shirts, skirts, pants, dresses, suits, shoes, belts, bags and other accessories at knockdown prices. MFG is Asia's largest and only Italian fashion stockhouse chain. Its first Corso Marconi shop in Makati City started out as a warehouse for Linea Italia Group stocks. Today, there are five Corso Marconi shops found in key commercial areas in Metro Manila, Alabang and Cebu.

6th CEP real estate lecture series

THE URBAN Institute of Real Estate is holding its 6th CEP-Real Estate lecture series. The nest sessions are on Dec. 1 and 2 from 1:30 to 6 p.m. The series is intended for aspiring real estate developers, investors, financiers, owners and realty brokers for the renewal of their license. The following topics shall be covered: Dec. 1–Property Development and Joint Venture and Syndication for Real Estate Projects; Evaluating Land Potential; Feasibility Criteria; Development Cost; Development Process; Residential Subdivision Development; Commercial Development; Industrial Development; Condominium Development; Participation Mortgages; Syndications; Joint Ventures; Reasons for Joint Ventures and Syndications; Important Provisions in a Joint Venture Agreement; Organizational Forms; The Developer' Role; The Lender's Role. On Dec 2: Real Estate Taxation with Updates; and Elements of a Successful Realty Office; For more information, call Urban Institute at 681-0928 and 681-0953 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph

Giordano opens biggest branch at Glorietta

TFB Inc., one of the largest specialty apparel corporations in the Philippines, will be opening the biggest Giordano store today, Dec. 1, 5 p.m., at the ground floor of Glorietta 4 in Makati. A fashion show follows the inauguration. The company acquired the exclusive distribution rights to retail Giordano products in the Philippines in November 1989. It now operates 37 company-owned shops all throughout the country, and has three sub-franchises. From a relatively unknown brand, Giordano has grown into a household name in the country.

Top business and political personalities honored

CHAIR Lilia R. Bautista of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Quirino Representative Junie E. Cua, Commanding General Jaime S. de los Santos of the Philippine Army, and former Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Dakila B. Fonacier are four of the 10 alumni to be honored by the University of the Philippines-College of Business Administration during its alumni homecoming on Sunday, Dec. 2 at UP Diliman, Quezon City. The other UP-CBA distinguished alumni awardees are Flordelis Francisco Arguenza of Planters Development Bank, Antonio M. Cailao of Asia e-Bank and Commercial Banking Group of Fleet Boston Financial, Florido P. Casuela of the PNB and BSP, Victoria Bello-Jardiolin of Confetti Shoes and Natasha, Conchita L. Manabat of CL Manabat & Co., and Aurora Mauricio-Rubin of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu. Call the college at 926-0253 for more information.

SISPA GET-TOGETHER

Shown (from left) are the new officers of the Southville International School Parents Association Inc. (Sispa) for school year 2001-2002: Lucy Raterta and Loida Liwanag, board members; Jane Yang, auditor; Bhebot Rummel, treasurer; TJ Moncupa, assistant secretary; Marissa Adriano, PRO; Raul Bulaong, board member; Fe Zulueta, president; Nikki Milano, secretary; Cathy Palma, board member, Virgie Watson, assistant treaurer; Inday Culalic and Ligaya Sacristia, board members; and Pepai Balibalos, vice president.

NEW FROM MAMA SITA'S

Mama Sita's Mixes and Sauces recently launched five new products at the Chateau 1771 Side Bar in Malate, Manila. Now available in the market are Mama Sita's Java Sauce, and all-around sauce or fried or steamed dishes; Mama Sita's Sweet and Sour Sauce, a naturally colored sauce or dip for a variety of fried foods; Mama Sita's Pure Labuyo Chili Sauce, made from native Philippine peppers; Mama Sita's Escabeche Mix, a naturally colored base for the preparation of sweet and sour dishes; and Mama Sita's Tamarind Seasoning Paste, made from fresh unripe tamarind thickened with yam for a hotter and thicker sinigang. Shown at the launching are (from left) Perlita Dyogi of RYD Enterprises, Betty Viniuan of Louis Maclean, Cora Alforja of FCG Trading, a guest and Editha Duero of RYD Enterprises.

DEATH BENEFIT PAYMENT

John Graham (third from left), Swire representative of Anscor Swire Management Corp., is shown handing over the death benefit check from Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd. to Luzviminda, widow of the late Ramon Garcia. The life insurance benefit is part of the comprehensive benefit package that Anscor Swire Management Corp. offers to its seafarers, with Insular Life as the life insurance provider. Also shown is Dindo G. Soriano (second from right), Insular Life Group Specialist, with Rey Marras (right), Parañaque district office manager, and Gemma, beneficiary sister-in-law.

SULO HOTEL LAUDS WINNERS

Leandro D. Enriquez, The Sulo Hotel's president and CEO (center) poses with second quarter winners for their exemplary service. With him are (from left) Employee of the Quarter Zaldy M. Callueng of the security department and Supervisor of the Quarter Elizabeth D. Bucsit of the front office department. They each won a plaque, gift certificates and cash awards.

The good 'bad guys'

BY MASSIE K. SANTOS
Contributor

AT A TIME when the public is being besieged with stories of biological terrorism and biochemical warfare, it seems necessary to remind people that not all microscopic organisms are bent on destroying the human race.

Scientists estimate that there are approximately 14 billion species of living things on Earth, and only a tenth of them have been identified, most falling under the general categories of plant or animal.

The November issue of Scientific American reports that scientists have only identified 1,550 of the 400,000 possible viruses, and only 4 percent of the 100,000 bacteria and archaea, but people shouldn't go out and buy every single antibacterial and antiviral product there is and will be in the market. While scientists have already identified over a billion species of insects, they assume that there are nearly nine billion species out there.

What do all these numbers mean? There may yet be a scientific explanation for UFOs, the Loch Ness monster and the Abominable Snowman after all.

Without downplaying the threat of biological warfare nor overemphasizing the fact that man has much to learn about the biological diversity of his environment, it is clear that the public has to realize that bacteria and viruses are not always harmful.

The smallpox vaccine is actually a weakened form of cowpox, if anyone remembers his science classes.

Let's expand the category to include organisms visible to the naked eye: leeches are being used in several hospitals to reduce the swelling in patients' limbs, maggots eat dead or decomposing flesh of burn and diabetic patients to give healthy skin space to grow.

Some germs are actually good for the body.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Probiotics such as *Lactobacillus* and *bifidobacterium*, for example, prevent the growth of *E. coli* and salmonella in the body, and may even fight carcinogens. The T1 bacterial strain has been found to break down toluene, found in gasoline and household solvents, and is being used to clean up contaminated soil and water. Bioleaching facilities are also in the works to process copper and gold in an environment-friendly manner.

One of the more recent additions to the helpful bacteria category is cyanobacteria. More commonly known as the blue green algae in the ocean, it is already known for its ability to take in great amounts of carbon dioxide and give back pure oxygen, and absorb nitrites that may poison the soil. In early November, scientists from the University of Texas at Austin found that nine species of cyanobacteria have the ability to synthesize cellulose. And while some may equate cellulose with cellulite (and thus need a dictionary), others may recognize cellulose as a plant fiber, serving as the primary component of cell walls. Few may realize that cellulose is an important fiber in paper production. There may come a day when there will no longer be a need to clear rainforests for paper.

Again, man still knows very little about the environment outside of what he has made for himself. That ignorance leads to a feeling of loss of control, which translates into fear.

It is best to remember that knowledge is a two-edged sword, the applications of which can help or harm, depending on the wielder's intentions. One would therefore think that it is better to err on the side of caution and stay informed. These days, despite the desire to keep away from the media frenzy, ignorance is not bliss. Like it or not, events that happen around the world do affect people everywhere. To echo the children's song, it really is "a small world after all."

(Please direct any comments to the author at massie@massie.com.)

ASK THE DENTIST

PAUL R. DE CASTRO, DMD

The gap

I HAVE a gap between my two front teeth. Should I get braces or veneers?

Ron C.

If you can imagine your teeth slightly wider than their present shape enough to fill in the gap and the picture in your head doesn't look funny, then veneers or bonding is for you.

Now if this mental picture looks ugly and the teeth look too big, then braces will give you better cosmetic results when the space is closed. Braces will also fix your other teeth from any other problem in their alignment. However there are cases where the gaps are caused by gum disease in which case you would need to fix the gum problem first before considering braces. Braces require healthy gums and bone in order to have a good result or else one would end up with loose teeth in the right position.

* * *

Dr. De Castro, a UP College of Dentistry graduate, is a cosmetic and general dentist licensed in the Philippines and the United States. Questions are welcome at dentalqs@yahoo.com.

Beware of bacterial disease spread by rats

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

WHILE the horrors of the Black Death are confined safely in the pages of history books, the sight of rodents running around still reminds us that these animals are capable of spreading diseases much like the one that wiped out one-third of medieval Europe in just a span of five years.

Although rodents were not the real culprits of the Black Death (they carried fleas infected with *Yersinia pestis* bacteria), the animals are nevertheless considered an important carrier of diseases.

At a public health forum of the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, Louella Dancel, professor emeritus at the Department of Microbiology of the University of the Philippines Manila, warned against leptospirosis, another major bacterial disease that frequently plagues the country.

In humans, leptospirosis is caused by *Leptospira interrogans*. Apart from rodents, other carriers of the bacteria include pets like dogs and cats, and livestock like swine, carabaos and horses.

Among the symptoms of leptospirosis are high fever, severe headache, chills, muscle aches and vomiting. They may include jaundice (yellow skin and eyes), red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhea, or a rash. Many of these symptoms can be mistaken for other diseases so laboratory testing of blood or urine sample is required to confirm leptospirosis.

High incidence

Leptospirosis occurs worldwide but is most common in temperate or tropical climates like the Philippines. When floods occur, an outbreak of leptospirosis is likely to follow. The disease peaks from August to October when rains and floods are frequent. The incidence is also increasing among children in urban areas.

In the Philippines, the National Capital Region registers the most number of leptospirosis cases. "In fact, the disease made headlines in 1999 when leptospirosis downed hundreds of inmates at the Manila City Jail after heavy rains flooded the compound," reports Dancel. "We found out later that because of the accumulated garbage around the compound (inhabited by leptospira-infected rodents) the disease spread easily to the overcrowded cells," reports Dancel.

Treating leptospirosis

Producing a vaccine against leptospirosis is laborious since the bacteria have over 200 serovars or subtypes and different animals can carry different serovars. "Doctors must first identify the infecting serovar before a vaccine can be developed. Unfortunately, with so many subtypes a universal vaccine is almost impossible to create," admits Dancel.

The time between a person's exposure to a contaminated source and becoming sick takes two days to four weeks. Illness usually begins abruptly with fever and other symptoms. If one suspects of having symptoms suggestive of leptospirosis, he should contact a health care provider as soon as possible.

Leptospirosis may occur in two phases. After the first phase, usually characterized by fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, vomiting, or diarrhea, the patient may recover for a time but may become ill again. The bad news is that once a second phase occurs, the disease is more severe. During the second phase, also called Weil's disease, the person may suffer from kidney or liver failure and sometimes meningitis.

The illness lasts from a few days to three weeks or longer. Without treatment, recovery may take several months, according to Dancel.

Antibiotics, such as doxycycline or penicillin are known antibiotics against leptospirosis. "But they should be given early in the course of the disease. Intravenous antibiotics may be required for persons with more severe symptoms," reminds Dancel.

Other preventive measures include providing protective clothing for individuals with occupational exposure, controlling rodent infestation and immunizing pets.

Worldwide diabetes prevalence seen

THE NUMBER of people with diabetes worldwide will more than double, from 140 million to 300 million in the next 25 years, if current lifestyle trends continue, according to recent estimates based on studies by world health authorities. But there is a positive note: while one factor—aging—is not preventable, other factors such as unhealthy diets, being overweight and obese, and sedentary lifestyles are modifiable, say experts.

A matter of primary concern, say authorities, is type 2 diabetes, which occurs most commonly in adults and is the most common form of diabetes, accounting for approximately 90 to 95 percent of all diabetes cases worldwide. Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder that is a result of the body's inability to respond well to the action of insulin (insulin resistance) produced by the pancreas. Insulin in involved in many metabolic processes, one of which is the regulation of blood sugar. Type 2 diabetes is characterized by high blood sugar levels (hyperglycaemia).

If diabetes is not properly treated, this disease can lead to serious complications including heart disease and stroke; eye disease and blindness; kidney failure; nerve disease that can result in foot ulcerations, which can lead to amputations.

Risk factor

Weight is the No. 1 modifiable risk factor for type 2 diabetes. Being overweight or obese is a significant independent predictor for type 2 diabetes. Currently, more than 80 percent of people with type 2 diabetes are overweight or obese.

The accumulation of visceral abdominal adipose (fat) tissue is especially associated with type 2 diabetes. Excess abdominal fat is also associated with a cluster of metabolic abnormalities that included insulin resistance, high blood sugar, abnormal blood lipids and high blood pressure. A proportional relationship exists between weight and type 2 diabetes. This means, for example, that the risk of type 2 diabetes doubles in women who gain 5 to 7.9 kilos and triples in those who gain more than 8 kilos after the age of 18. Another example is: women who lose more than 5 kilos reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by half.

The link between weight and type 2 diabetes is insulin resistance. As weight increases the body becomes insensitive to insulin's effect, and as a result, the pancreas produces greater quantities of insulin. With increasing duration or severity of obesity, insulin resistance progressively worsens and type 2 diabetes occurs. The severity of insulin resistance rises with weight gain and decreases with weight loss.

Insulin resistance also affects the very complex control of fat metabolism. These disturbances can lead to the typical pattern of abnormal blood lipids seen in obesity and type 2 diabetes. These abnormalities contribute to the greatly increase risk of coronary heart disease and other cardiovascular complications associated with type 2 diabetes.

Weight management

Effective weight management is an essential component of the long-term treatment of type 2 diabetes. Weight loss of 5 to 10 percent can improve blood sugar control and insulin sensitivity in patients with type 2 diabetes, and is also associated with significant improvements in other cardiovascular risk factors, such as abnormal blood lipids (dyslipideemia) and high blood pressure (hypertension).

Diet and exercise are usually the first-line interventions in overweight or obese patients with type 2 diabetes. However, very few overweight or obese people with type 2 diabetes can successfully achieve and maintain clinically beneficial weight loss through diet and exercise alone. These weight loss challenges are often due to poor eating patterns and food choices, as well as a sedentary lifestyle. In addition, some of the most widely used antidiabetic medications, including insulin and sulphonylureas, induce weight gain.

Xenical, a lipase inhibitor that blocks the absorption of dietary fat, plus a reduced fat diet causes significantly greater weight loss in patients with type 2 diabetes taking either insulin, sulphonylureas or metformin than placebo plus diet. In addition, weight management with Xenical results in significantly improved blood sugar control. Improvements in other cardiovascular risk factor such as blood lipid levels are also significantly greater compared with control (placebo plus diet).

E SUPPORT OF
MERCK
MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD

P500,000 WORTH OF MEASLES VACCINES

Reiner Gloor, board member of Zuellig Foundation, prepares to turn over 2,000 measles vaccines to Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit as part of the DoH's continuing campaign to eradicate measles in the country. Aventis Pasteur, Merck Sharp and Dohme Phils., GlaxoSmithKline and Zuellig Pharma donated the vaccines through the Zuellig Foundation as their contribution to the fight against the disease.

HEALTHSCOPE

AIDS day party

A DANCE party will mark the celebration of World AIDS Day tonight starting at 10 on the roof deck of Pride Exchange Shop at 1807 Orosa corner Nakpil St. Malate, Manila. Part of the proceeds of the Malate dance party will go to the Helpline service of Reach Out. The Helpline is a telephone counseling service on AIDS/STDs, family planning, sexuality, child abuse, violence against women and other reproductive health concerns. Expected to attend this dance event are the Malate crowd, the tri-media, the NGOs and donor community.

Clinic's Internet website

BEVERLY Hills-trained Filipino hair transpantation experts from the Andrew Pineda Medical Clinics have launched the clinic's official Internet website via www. pinedahair.com.ph. The company said the move is geared toward beefing up and widening its market reach nationwide and worldwide. Company spokesman Dr. Andrew Pineda said more than 800 balding Filipinos are now free from the psychosocial anxiety and psychological depression, with their newly restored hair transplants boosting their self-image and self-identity.

Medical services firm offering latest allergy testing technology

ASIA Pacific Medical & Diagnostic Services is now offering an advanced system that detects allergies in patients.

The system, known as the UniCAP 100-E allergy-testing device, responds to the alarming growth of allergy cases reported in the Philippines and thus reaffirms APMDS' motto of "Excellence in Diagnostic Health Care."

Around seven million Filipinos are today afflicted with various types of allergies—roughly 10 percent of the entire population.

Different tests

Installed recently at the APMDS, the UniCAP 100E has brought to the Philippines a unique system of immunoassay system, which is fast, fully integrated and automated. In a single desktop unit, UniCAP 100E can complete up to 48 different tests from among 450 different allergens, in less than three hours.

In the UniCAP system, a simple blood sample is all that is needed to determine which among the over 500 allergens causes the patient's specific allergic reaction.

There are three major types of allergy tests available through the UniCAP system. The screening test is the Total IgE test that measures the patient's level of IgE (Immunoglobulin-E). When the IgE level is high, the patient is confirmed to have an allergy.

Another test is the Phadiatop, which determines whether the patient's allergy is caused by inhalant allergens or not. The last type of test is called the specific IgE test that determines exactly which allergen is causing the patient's allergic reaction. Through these tests, particularly the specific IgE test, the doctor would be able to advise the patient regarding the proper preventive measures to take.

Better option

• The UniCAP system is specially designed to complement the commonly used skin-prick system for blood-testing technique, especially in infants, elderly with wrinkled skin and in patients with extensive allergy injury or extreme sensitivity to allergens. It is also a better option for patients who fear multiple skin pricking. The UniCAP system has high sensitivity and specificity and is calibrated by the World Health Organization standard.

"We believe that UniCAP 100E will also add a new potential to our clinicians' diagnostic armory, thus providing the best possible service to the patients and doctors nationwide," said Steve Flemming, chief operating officer of the APMDS.

The UniCAP technology is manufactured by Pharmacia Diagnostics, represented in the Philippines by Trianon International Inc. It is a division of Pharmacia Corp. based in Upsalla, Sweden. The parent company is the world leader in in-vitro diagnostic research and product innovation.

Availability

Currently, the state-of-the-art UniCAP allergy technology is also available at the Manila Doctor's Hospital, The Medical City, Asiatic Medical Laboratory, Healthway Medical Clinics (all branches), Asia Pacific Diagnostic Laboratory (all branches), Perpetual Help Medical Center, Advent Specialist Care, Sim's Medical Laboratory and the Medic World.

For other queries on allergies and APMDS' allergy testing, one may log on to www.isitallergy.com or call up the Trianon International office at 892-0723 to 24.

PLG News & View

DoH gives LGUs ₱258-M assistance

TO AVERT cases of pregnancy-related deaths, the Department of Health has released over P258-million worth of medical equipment and supplies to the local governments in the country's high-risk areas.

Released were more than P115-million worth of safe home delivery kits (SHDKs), P69 million worth of micronutrients, and P74 million worth of medical equipment from the Asian, Development Bank and the World Bank.

These equipment and supplies will, in turn, be distributed by the local government units (LGUs) to their constituents through the provincial or district hospitals' rural health units, barangay health stations, and the maternity waiting homes (MWHs) and lying-in clinics (LICs) newly built by the DoH for pregnant women.

The sites for the LICs and MWHs were selected based on the high maternal mortality and poverty levels.

This massive logistical operation forms part of the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project, which is being implemented by the DoH in coordination with its regional health offices and the concerned LGUs.

Led by Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit and Undersecretaries Antonio Lopez and Alexander Padilla, the WHSMP integrates women's health and safe motherhood into the regular services of the country's health units.

The WHSMP also includes an educational component, the "Healthy *Nanay, Magandang Buhay*" program, which advocates and promotes safe and healthy pregnancy by making households and all other sectors get involved n the fight against the causes of maternal deaths.

Such causes are poor nutrition, failure to have regular prenatal and postnatal checkups, complications due to reproductive disorders, and infections due to unsterilized delivery at home.

These were the reasons for the supply of micronutrients and medical equipment to certain LGUs, the construction of MWHs and LICs in priority areas, the training of health workers and professionals in maternal care as well as the distribution of safe home delivery kits at very affordable prices.

Also involved in the WHSMP are the Bureau of Local Health and Development, Bureau of International Health Cooperation, the community health directors, Health Infrastructure Service, Office for Management Services, National Center for Health Promotion, and the centers for Infectious Diseases, Degenerative Diseases, and Family and Environmental Health.

Conceptualized at the DoH central office, the WHSMP is designed to be sustained over the long term by institutionalizing it at the local level, or through its eventual ownership by the LGUs using their devolved powers from the national government.

SCIENCE/HEALTH

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor ■ STELLA O. GONZALES, Assistant Editor

WORLD AIDS DAY

Targeting men for HIV/AIDS prevention

BY CHARLES E. BUBAN

TIME may have blunted some of the initial panic over the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome but the fact remains—there is no sign the epidemic is slowing down.

Since the epidemic came into public knowledge in 1981, AIDS has claimed 18.8 million lives worldwide. This figure will further increase, with more than 36 million people today positive for the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS.

AIDS is now the fourth leading cause of death globally. The disease will kill at least one-third of the young men and women in countries where it has its firmest hold, according to the World Health Organization.

In Africa, AIDS is the leading cause of death. In seven African countries, more than 20 percent of the population aged 15-49 is infected with HIV. Within 10 years, there will be 40 million children in Africa orphaned by AIDS.

Medical science has yet to provide a definitive treatment for HIV/AIDS. This is not to say that there has been no meaningful progress in treating the disease. Today, it is possible to extend the life and good health of people with HIV/AIDS by several more years, compared to when the disease was first identified.

Since 1996, many adult AIDS patients have been taking drug cocktails consisting of protease inhibitors along with older medicines. The combination has greatly suppressed the virus and cut AIDS-related deaths. Because of this treatment, some children who were born infected with HIV are now in college.

Costly AIDS cocktails

But dealing with HIV/AIDS is financially challenging, particularly to those living in an economy like the Philippines, lamented Gladys Villanueva, a health education and promotions officer at the Philippine National Aids Council.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

"The cost of research alone entails a lot of money, how much more the treatment that is only meant to delay the progression of HIV to AIDS?" she noted.

At $15,000 (over P750,000) a year, the cost of the regimen that has helped thousands of HIV-positive people in the United States and Europe is beyond the reach of most Africans and Asians. How many HIV-positive Filipinos can shell out tens of thousands a month for the treatment?

"That's why it is only logical for the government and other organizations to campaign for its prevention," says Villanueva whose organization is the central advisory, planning and policy-making body for the comprehensive and integrated HIV/AIDS prevention and control program in the Philippines.

WHO estimates that there are about 10,000 HIV-positive Filipinos, which translates to an annual infection rate of less than one percent. Although this is much lower than most countries, the Philippines should not be complacent.

"Although homosexuals and sex workers account for most of our cases, AIDS is creeping out of well-defined epidemiological confines," notes Villanueva.

The Department of Hearth has documented 1,573 HIV-positive individuals since January 1984 when the country started gathering data on HIV/AIDS. Of this number, more than 500 already have AIDS.

"What was alarming from these figures is the fact that one-fourth of the cases were individuals who worked overseas and the predominant mode of transmission was heterosexual contact," said Villanueva.

Men shaping AIDS epidemic

In the WHO Western Pacific region, men are driving the AIDS epidemic, accounting for 70 to 80 percent of all HIV infections.

Everywhere in the region, men's sexual behavior and habits have determined the epidemic's course and extent. It is from men that the virus spreads to women, their wives and partners, and then to children. More men than women have large numbers of sexual partners. Studies show that in general, Asian women have few sexual partners—many have only one.

Men are also far more likely to use drugs and engage in other behavior that can lead to HIV infection.

Yet, although this is essentially a male epidemic, AIDS programs have not necessarily targeted men.

This is why the involvement of men in AIDS prevention programs was selected as the theme for today's World AIDS Day. The campaign—which has the slogan, "I care...do you?"—calls on men to join the battle against AIDS.

"Men need to be part of the solution, not just part of the problem. It is men who can change the direction of the epidemic," said Dr Shigeru Omi, director for the WHO Western Pacific region.

Notions of manhood

Not all men put themselves at risk of HIV infection—indeed it is estimated that only one in four men do. However, cultural notions about manhood influence the behavior of men.

In many countries, men are encouraged to have many sexual partners. In some countries, it is almost a rite of passage for young men to visit sex workers.

This year's campaign calls for men to become involved in the fight against AIDS. Among the strategies suggested by the WHO:

- Tailor HIV programs to men's needs and seek their participation. Programs are more effective when aimed at groups with a higher risk of infection, such as migrant workers, truck drivers, gay men, soldiers and men going to clinics for sexually transmitted infections.
- Promote condoms more aggressively to men. The 100 percent condom use program in entertainment outlets in Cambodia and Thailand targeted men as well as sex workers. This has resulted in significant drops in HIV infection.
- Encourage men to seek health information and services. In many countries, men are far less likely to seek health care than women. Also, men are often left out from sexual and reproductive health initiatives, leaving them with little knowledge about such issues.
- Make men recognize their responsibility to their partners and children. In some Asian countries, it is not unusual to find infected men demanding sex from their uninfected wives—without the use of condoms. Women may be unable to refuse sex out of a fear of violence. A recent study claims that one in three women has been beaten, abused or coerced into sex in her lifetime.
- Target younger men and boys, who have a higher risk of HIV infection and are also more likely to change their behavior than older men.

Villanueva said that in line with this campaign, several organizations are collaborating with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and the Department of Labor and Employment in handing out "survival kits" to departing overseas workers.

"This way our OFWs are well-armed with the necessary information and reading materials that they may have missed out during their predeparture seminars," explains Villanueva.

For now, information is perhaps the only way to fight AIDS.

Estimated no. of HIV infections in selected Western Pacific countries (2000)

Country	Estimated HIV prevalence (age 15 to 46)	Estimated amount of men among HIV+ adults (%)
Australia	12,000	93
Malaysia	42,000	90
China	600,000	88
Republic of Korea	3,800	87
Japan	10,000	86
New Zealand	1,200	83
Singapore	3,900	80
Vietnam	122,000	80
Cambodia	169,000	66
Philippines	**10,000**	**60**
Papua New Guinea	15,000	50

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Hydrogen in transportation

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

MY article on hydrogen-powered transportation (May 5, 2001) elicited responses from some readers, who kindly included their e-mail and useful cites to aid Mike de los Angeles [myk0507@yahoo.com] who started the discussion in the first place.

Lazaro D. Basinang [lazbasinang@canada.com], a mechanical engineer in Abu Dhabi Oil Refining Co., UAE, says:

I was interested upon reading your column on hydrogen as a contemporary energy breakthrough. If you surf on the Web, you will note that the hydrogen fuel cell has already been used by the US Department of Defense in aeronautics as early as 1935. A year ago, it appeared in the World Science Fair, which was attended by students from the US, Germany, Canada, Italy, UK, among others.

I think that the hydrogen fuel cell was discovered as something like a battery but with reverse function. You mix hydrogen and oxygen (air) in the cell, which produces electricity, with heat and water as byproducts. If I am not mistaken, this was used by the Apollo 11 spaceship on their trip to the moon. Now there are four types of cells that have been invented, depending on the electrolytes used. Each differs in heat emission, ventilation and reproduction of fuel (through electrolysis, most likely). Polymer, ceramic and molten phosphate are among those used.

I am not a writer, but I am interested in sharing something to Mike and the Filipino people. Research now is on hydrogen as fuel, especially on safety issues. One method is compression, where liquid hydrogen is used as the car fuel (the car has no more internal combustion engine but rather a hydrogen cell). Oil will be phased out in the automotive world–projected in the year 2010. BMW has already introduced a car to be run by hydrogen fuel cell last year in the UAE where I am working now. I have read that manufacturers like GMC, Ford, Chrysler, BMW and Fiat are now mass producing these cars. The leading countries are the US, Canada, Italy, Germany and the UK. (I have not read about Japan.)

Extraction of hydrogen is also being studied. One way is to extract it by solar energy from sea water (the biggest source of hydrogen). Other means include electrolysis, bio-gas, steam performer through oil. Go to any search engine, type "hydrogen fuel cell" and you will see lots of sites. I prefer the US Department of Defense because it is more reliable and clear. There are also more inventions in energy production, such as the RHIC (relativistic heavy ion collider) and compressed air to be used in automobiles and spaceships.

Thank you for this information. I do wish we can find alternative fuel sources, but I am not optimistic about conventional fuel being phased out nine years from now. (Let us keep our fingers crossed.) However, I have read that Japan carmakers are also investigating this issue. As for your not being a writer, most readers who send messages are not writers either (many say they normally do not write letters to newspapers), but they hope to help fellow Filipinos in scientific quests. Readers like you, who are willing to share information, are a major reason this column keeps going.

Another helpful reader is Jun Aquino [aytph@yahoo.com], who wrote:

To know more about hydrogen and its application to transportation, go to the website www.ballard.com. The link pages will increase your thirst for more knowledge. The key is to go to a computer using cable. Actually, you were fortunate in being assigned the topic on hydrogen. That's the energy source of the future.

In fact, an hour ago I rode in a fuel-cell-powered Daimler Chrysler NECAR 4 (Mercedes A class) being demonstrated in their Vancouver plant. Good luck.

I am envious. When will I get the chance to ride in a state-of-the-art car? Let's hope that ubiquitous hydrogen really becomes, as Jun says, the energy source of the future.

A third reader who wrote with tips is an old acquaintance, physics whiz Perry Esguerra. (We first met as guests on a TV show, I think, in Randy David's "Public Forum" several years back.) He offers several useful websites.

You may find the following websites useful: www.hydrogen.org, www.eren.doe.gov, and www.osti. gov/hyd/hydhome. To read the articles in the last site, you will need Acrobat Reader (which may be downloaded for free. Just go to www.adobe.com.)

Thanks.

Thank you, too. I am sure Mike also extends his thanks. It is not every day that your homework assignment can be answered by several authorities, both local and international.

COPD: A sensual rejoinder; the PGH issue

MEDICAL FILES

FOLLOWING our article in this space on the patient with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), we received some queries on the performance of normal physical activities by COPD patients, particularly the act of sexual intimacy.

For many, sex, as a sanctified expression of human love, is one of the key factors in a marital relationship. But what if there is a disrupting factor, say shortness of breath due to COPD, during sexual intercourse between partners? Does this mean that sexual intimacy is absolutely contraindicated in COPD patients?

Not so, according to medical experts, contrary to the wrong notions of COPD patients themselves.

A recent study conducted by investigators from Columbia University in the United States revealed that many COPD patients are worried that any sexual activity will only exacerbate symptoms. According to Prof. Ilan Meyer, co-author of the study, COPD patients are so depressed that they become less interested or unable to participate in any sexual activities.

Sex lives

The study, which was presented at the meeting of the prestigious American Thoracic Society, enrolled 353 adults who have COPD and were confined at the Harlem Hospital in New York because of shortness of breath (SOB) and difficulty of breathing. They were asked to evaluate their sex lives on a seven-point scale: one for completely limited and seven for no limitation at all.

Overall, 19 percent of the patients reported that they did not engage in sex at all, 19 percent said their sex lives were "very or totally" limited, and a further 16 percent said there was moderate limitation. Only 34 percent reported no limitations in their sexual activity.

Professor Meyer explained that the amount of physical activity required during sex might trigger COPD symptoms. At the same time, sexual behavior is limited by persistent symptoms such as shortness of breath (SOB). Because of these limiting symptoms, COPD patients are depressed because they feel that they cannot satisfy their partner's sexual needs.

Limitations

Professor Meyer added that the psychosocial life of chronic lung patients is diminished due to limitations in their activities, some of which are self-imposed rather than prescribed by their physicians. Because of COPD symptoms, they have a very limited recreational ability, increased preoccupation with their bodies, decreased self- esteem, and a lot of anxiety, depression, and overdependence.

"Patients are depressed because of the limits COPD places on their lives, and the depression itself contributes to the limited activity," Professor Meyer said.

The essential aspect of the study lies in the fact that the patient will now be able to recognize that lower sex drive may be linked to COPD. Thus, consultation with the doctor for evaluation is important. The doctor, for his part, might consider asking his COPD patients about their sex lives as a means of gauging whether the patient's symptoms are adequately controlled. A less active sex life might suggest that the patient is depressed because of COPD symptoms.

"Asking the patient about his or her sex life should not be any different than asking them about other form of physical exercise," Professor Meyer pointed out.

Through consultation, the COPD patient will also know what type of medication may interfere with his sexual drive. Medication specific for the lungs will not affect the sexual drive but other medications, such as antidepressants, may interfere with one's sexual drive.

Because of the physical effort required COPD patients are also advised that it is important to have adequate rests both before and after sexual relations. For those who require supplemental oxygen, they may use the same amount of oxygen during the sexual act. Sexual activity should be avoided immediately after a heavy meal, after consuming alcohol, in an uncomfortable room temperature or when under emotional stress. All of these factors will only increase one's fatigability.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

One of the key ingredients in solving sexual dysfunction due to COPD symptoms is communication. Partners in a relationship need to be free to express their feeling in dealing with lung disease. It needs to be made clear what limitation lung disease puts on a person and what the impact of those limitations are on the partner as well.

Joining a support group is an option of finding an outlet to express feeling and to interact with people having similar sexual dysfunction due to COPD. Counseling is another option because it helps resolve remaining personal conflicts.

Energy conservation is important for COPD patients so that they can fully enjoy with their partner. Fatigue and SOB are two COPD symptoms that affect sex the most. Thus, it might be easier to compare sex for COPD patients to starting an exercise program. Starting out slow, taking rests and not giving up are key to success. As with exercise, building your endurance and ability over time will get you to your goal.

'COPD-friendly' positions

It is essential to choose sex positions that are less energy consuming and can free the diaphragm to eliminate weight on the chest for optimal breathing. The following "COPD-friendly" positions are recommended for comfortable sexual intercourse with a COPD partner:

- Have the able-bodied partner assume a more active role so that the COPD partner becomes less fatigued or anxious.
- Lying on your side, face-to-face allows free and easy breathing for both partners.
- Lying on your side, back-to-front with the man behind.
- The woman kneeling on the floor bent over with her chest resting on the bed also eliminates the weight on the man.
- For men with COPD, laying on the back with the woman sitting on top allows for her to do most of the work.
- For women with COPD, sitting on the edge of the bed, feet on the floor, back resting on supporting pillows with the man kneeling on the floor in front, may be the most comfortable position.

For most COPD patients, the fear of SOB may lead to an inability to maintain sexual arousal or avoidance of sexual activity. The non-COPD partner may believe that abstaining from sexual activity is in the COPD partner's best interest. Quite the contrary, declining from sexual activity increases the loneliness and isolation of the person with COPD.

But it is good to point out that sex is not the only thing that completes a marital relationship. It is a lot more important for couples to listen with an open mind to each other's feelings and needs. By simply touching and being close to someone is enough to help a COPD patient feel loved in any given relationship. More important, putting God in the center of the relationship ensures that the relationship will be strong, sex or no sex.

* * *

The ongoing protests against the adjusted rates of some laboratory fees at the Philippine General Hospital seem to be a simple case of uncommunicated changes with stakeholders. Or, the rates hike may have been communicated but the concerned stakeholders would still like to cling on to the ideal scenario wherein all health services are provided to the citizenry completely free of charge. This is certainly most ideal and I too would join any movement, which would subscribe to it, if it is at all feasible.

The reality, however, as I have learned to accept in the 12 years that I have been connected with the PGH from intern to consultant until my "early retirement" in 1989, was that (and it still holds true up to this moment), the PGH director and his team have to be extra resourceful to muster enough funds to sustain its operations, and deliver quality care despite the meager funds at its disposal. Attribute it to their management skills and irresistible appeal to get hefty donations from foreign government grants, philanthropists, successful alumni, nongovernment organizations and other private sector benefactors, PGH through the years was able to move mountains to embark and maintain its modernization program so its title of being the country's premiere health care institution does not become a thing of the past.

I think it's a step in the right direction for all government hospitals to be run as efficiently as corporate establishments so it may become as self-sufficient as much as possible. It will certainly not be completely financially independent of the government since it still has to provide services to a lot of indigent patients, who deserve no less quality health care than paying patients, but it could never be an acceptable excuse that their mission of excellent care, training and research is no longer attainable because of luck of funds.

If the government subsidy is insufficient, then it must think of ways and means to raise funds to fill in the deficit and maintain its modernization program. I believe that most Filipinos would rather have the PGH charge reasonable laboratory fees than to see it slowly deteriorate and find itself more as a museum of antiquated instruments than a premier institution of excellent service, training and research, which it has always been in the close to a hundred years that it has existed.

* * *

Dr. Castillo is a past president of the Philippine Heart Association/Philippine College of Cardiology and the current chair of its Adult Specialty Board. For comments or inquiries, e-mail raffymd@i-manila.com.

Treat of the Week

Nestlé Cream

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2001 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER C1

Saturday SPECIAL

NESTOR U. TORRE, Editor EDMUND L. SICAM, Associate Editor

Honey and Fruit Dessert

5 tbsps. honey
juice of 2 lemons
dash of cinnamon
4 pcs. orange, peeled & thinly sliced crosswise
2 pcs banana, sliced 1/2" diagonally
1 cup pitted whole prunes
1 170g. can NESTLÉ CREAM, chilled

Combine first 3 ingredients in a small bottle. Shake for about 2 min. Set aside. Arrange orange, banana and prunes in a platter. Pour prepared dressing over fruits; cover and chill for about 2 hours. Serve with NESTLÉ CREAM.

Watch out for next week's fruity treat!

KUDROW. Plays unusual wife in "Bark."

REDFORD. Festival co-founder.

MOORE. Stars in "World Traveler."

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E-mail: fersal@skyinet.net

Sundance names films in 2002 festival competition

By Bob Tourtellotte

LOS ANGELES—The Sundance Film Festival, the premiere gathering for independent cinema in the United States, on Monday named the finalists for its 2002 dramatic and documentary film competitions with its usual, eclectic mix of new and familiar artists making the cut.

In the drama grouping, the list of 16 entrants includes the aptly titled "Bark," directed by Kasia Adamik and starring Lisa Kudrow and Hank Azaria in a story about a man who must deal with a wife who suffers from the delusion she is a dog.

Romantic relationships

Rebecca Miller, daughter of playwright Arthur Miller, returns to Sundance with "Personal Velocity," starring Kyra Sedgwick, Parker Posey and Fairuza Balk, in a story about three women trying to deal with difficult romantic relationships.

Documentaries also feature a wide array of 16 films ranging from "Daughter Danang" by Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco about an Asian American woman who struggles to understand the ways of her Vietnamese mother, to "Miss America," an account of the beauty pageant directed by Lisa Ades.

"There's always a lot of diversity at Sundance," said festival spokesman R.J. Millard.

Sundance, which was co-founded by actor Robert Redford, annually showcases the best in U.S. and world independent cinema, and many of the movies competing or premiering there become some of the hottest indie films of the year.

In 2001, a top Sundance performer was thriller "Memento," a murder story told backwards, that went on to become one of this year's hottest independent films. Perhaps an even better example is 1999 mock documentary, "The Blair Witch Project."

Digital equipment

Millard said the dramatic competition at Sundance 2002, which runs from Jan. 10 through Jan. 20 in the mountain town of Park City, Utah east of Salt Lake City, features many film made on low-cost digital equipment and two movies by Asian filmmakers with all-Asian casts—"Face," directed by Bertha Bay-Sa Pan, and "Better Luck Tomorrow."

For the first time, Sundance split its non-competitive "American Spectrum" group—which spotlights U.S. independent filmmakers—into two categories: "American Spectrum" and "American Showcase" to differentiate between lower budget films with lesser-known stars ("Spectrum") and higher profile movies with marquee names and bigger budgets ("Showcase").

The Showcase group, for example, includes "Storytelling" from director Todd Solondz, whose previous effort "Welcome to the Dollhouse" was a winner at 1995's Sundance Film Festival.

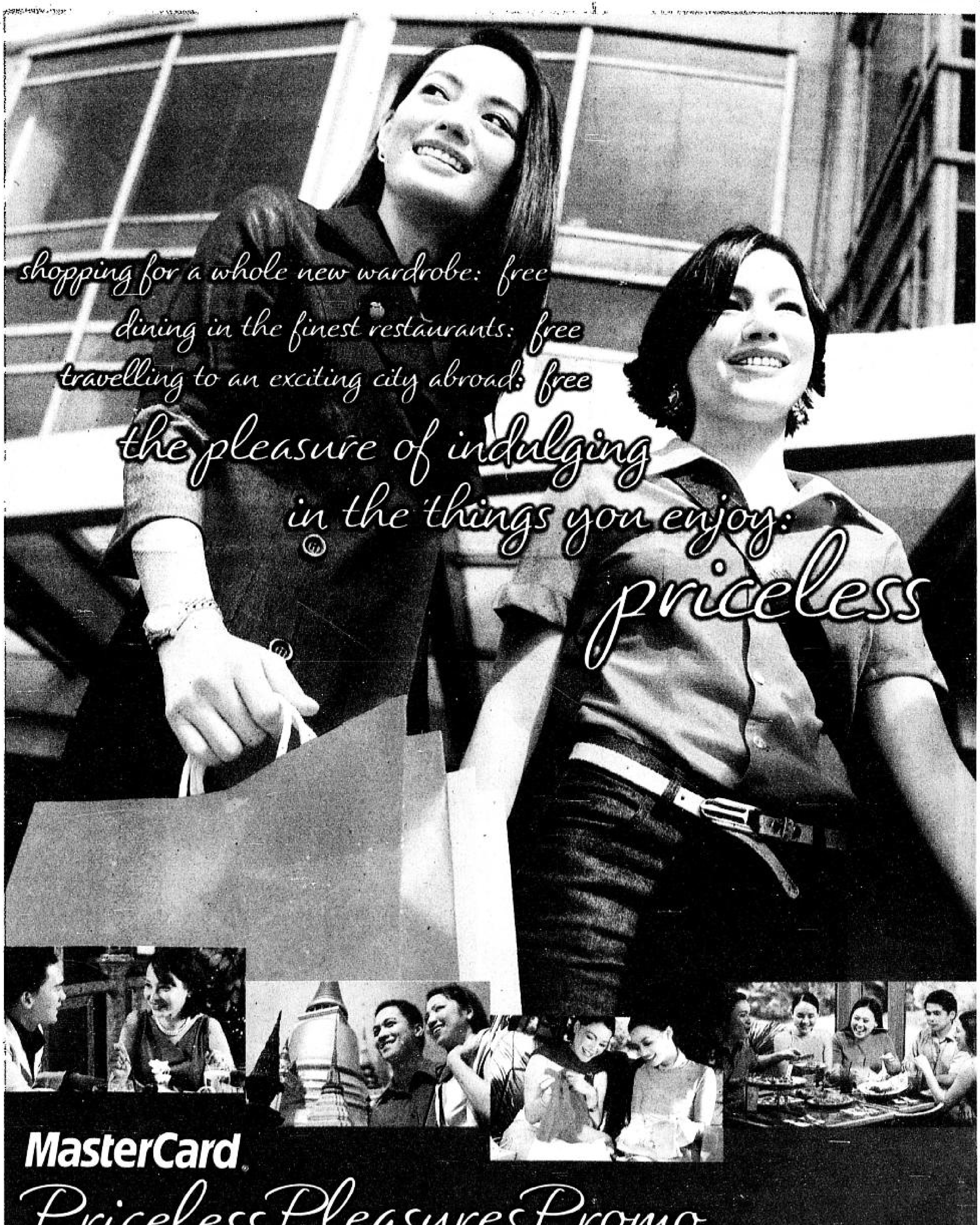
"World Traveler," starring Billy Crudup and Julianne Moore and directed by past Sundance entrant Bart Freundlich, also is in the Showcase category.

A list of categories and entrants follows:

Dramatic Competition

"Bark" directed by Kasia Adamik
"Better Luck Tomorrow" directed by Justin Lin
"Cherish" directed by Finn Taylor
"Face" directed by Bertha Bay-Sa Pan
"Killing Time" directed by Anthony Jaswinski
"Love Liza" directed by Todd Louiso
"Manito" directed by Eric Eason
"Narc" directed by Joe Carnahan
"Paradox Lake" directed by Prezemyslan (Shemi) Reut
"Personal Velocity" directed by Rebecca Miller
"Pumpkin" directed by Tony Abrams & Adam Larson Broder
"Real Women Have Curves" directed by Patricia Cardoso
"Secretary" directed by Steven Shainberg
"The Slaughter Rule" directed by Alex and Andrew Smith
"Tadpole" directed by Gary Winick

SUNDANCE/ P. C2



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4068, Series of 2001.

Robbie Coltrane clicks in plum character role

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"HARRY Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" has made a big, instant star of its young lead, and has revived the viewing public's interest in its veteran stars, like Richard Harris and Maggie Smith.

In addition, it has thrust into special prominence a "giant" talent in the person of British actor Robbie Coltrane, who is cast in the plum character role of Rubeus Hagrid, a young Harry's huge "guardian angel."

All of a sudden, moviegoers want to know more about Coltrane, who scores a personal triumph in the movie, where he comes on strong as a gruff but big-hearted friend and protector.

Just as Harry learns to depend on him, so too do young viewers feel secure when he arrives on the scene to rescue the movie's young wizards from the nasty adults who want to do them ill.

Coltrane's previous movies were the James Bond capers "GoldenEye" and "The World Is Not Enough," where he played decidedly, less endearing characters. Now that "Harry Potter" is a mega-hit, however, we can expect producers to cast this huge talent in a much more favorable light.

Feedback

Sometime back, reader Lauro J. Jocson wrote in to ask why he no longer sees the Turner Classic Movies channel on cable TV. We asked around and got this explanation from people in the know:

It was the decision of Turner's regional office in Singapore. They perceived a bigger demand for the Cartoon Network in this region, so they decided to stop airing Turner Classic Movies last July 1, but only in Asia. Turner Classic Movies is still being aired in the US.

It's possible, however, that TCM may return to Asia next year. If it does, it would be telecast for 24 hours, no longer in tandem with the Cartoon Network, which was what happened in the past.

New headturner

Commercials make stars in this country, so producers' eyes are now on Joanna Gonzales, the new endorser/model of Babes Anti-Perspirant Deo Roll On. Joanna says she really uses the product and likes it because it takes her through a hectic day with her sweet projection intact.

Some say that the young headturner reminds them of Charlene Gonzales and Jackielou Blanco, but Joanna wants to be her own person. She honed her acting chops in school plays, and has played supporting roles in films like "Sana Maulit Muli" and "Cedi: Ang Munting Prinsipe."

She has also appeared in teleseries like "Ana Karenina" and "Pintados," and is keeping her fingers crossed that he new movie, "Mga Batang Lansangan," makes it as an official entry in this year's Metro filmfest.

From stage role to own winery

Singer, actor and businessman Oby Castañeda is launching his company, Don Roberto's Winery's new product, Don Roberto's Mango Wine, at 7 p.m. tomorrow, Dec. 2 at Arkdia on Remedios st. in Malate.

We wonder if one of Oby's past roles gave him the idea for this new venture. When we directed the centennial show of San Miguel Corp. some years ago, we cast him in a 15-minute "opera" on how San Miguel Beer was first brewed, and he played the lead role of the brewer himself.

From a stage role to his own winery—Oby has certainly come a long way!

Ayen's Christmas CD

Another one of our past musical-theater talents, Ayen Munji, is active again on the local entertainment scene, after an unforgettable Brunei experience (about which we were sworn to secrecy—and mum *was* the word). Ayen was also in the San Miguel centennial show, by the way . . .

Her latest activity is the release of her first Christmas CD single, "Miss Kita Kung Christmas," under Viva Records.

It includes a revival of the song originally sung by Susan Fuentes (re-arranged by Marc Lopez), and Ayen's own version of "Laging Mayroong Bukas" (new arrangement by Danny Tan). The CD also contains the minus ones of the two songs.

MUNJI. Revival.

GONZALES. Sweet projection.

COLTRANE as Hagrid in "Harry Potter."

Sundance names films in 2002 festival competition

(From page C1)

"Xx/Xy" directed by Austin Chick

Screening out of Competition

"The End Of Love" directed by Peter Mattei

Documentary Competition

"Amandla!" A Revolution in four part harmony directed by Lee Hirsch

"American Standoff" directed by Kristi Jacobson

"Blue Vinyl" directed by Judith Helfand and Daniel B. Gold

"Close To Home" directed by Vanessa Roth and Alexandra Dickson

"The Cockettes" directed by Bill Weber and David Weissman

"Daddy And Papa" directed by Johnny Symons

"Daughter From Danang" directed by Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco

"Derrida" directed by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman

"The Execution Of Wanda Jean" directed by Liz Garbus

"Family Fundamentals" directed by Arthur Dong

"How To Draw A Bunny" directed by John Walter and Andrew Moore

"Miss America" directed by Lisa Ades

"Ralph Ellison: An American Journey" directed by Avon Kirkland

"Señorita Extraviada" directed by Lourdes Portillo

"Sister Helen" directed by Rebecca Cammisa and Rob Fruchtman

"Two Towns Of Jasper" directed by Whitney Dow and Marco Williams

American Spectrum

"Blue Car" directed by Karen Moncrieff

"The Business Of Fancydancing" directed by Sherman Alexie

"By Hook Or By Crook" directed by Silas Howard and Harriet Dodge

"Design" directed by Davidson Cole

"Devil's Playground" directed by Lucy Walker

"The Jimmy Show" directed by Frank Whaley

"Noon Blue Apples" directed by Jay Lee

"On-Line" directed by Jed Weintrob

"Rain" directed by Katherine Lindberg

"Stolen Summer" directed by Pete Jones

"That's My Face" directed by Thomas Allen Harris

American Showcase

"13 Conversation About One Thing" directed by Jill Sprecher

"Empire" directed by Franc Reyes

"Storytelling" directed by Todd Solondz

"Teknolust" directed by Lynn Hershman Leeson

"World Traveler" directed by Bart Freundlich ***Reuters***

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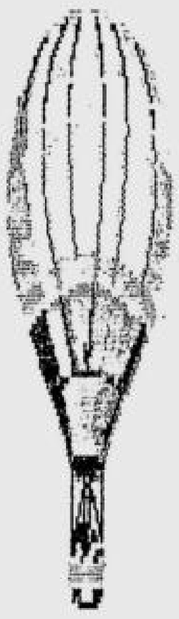

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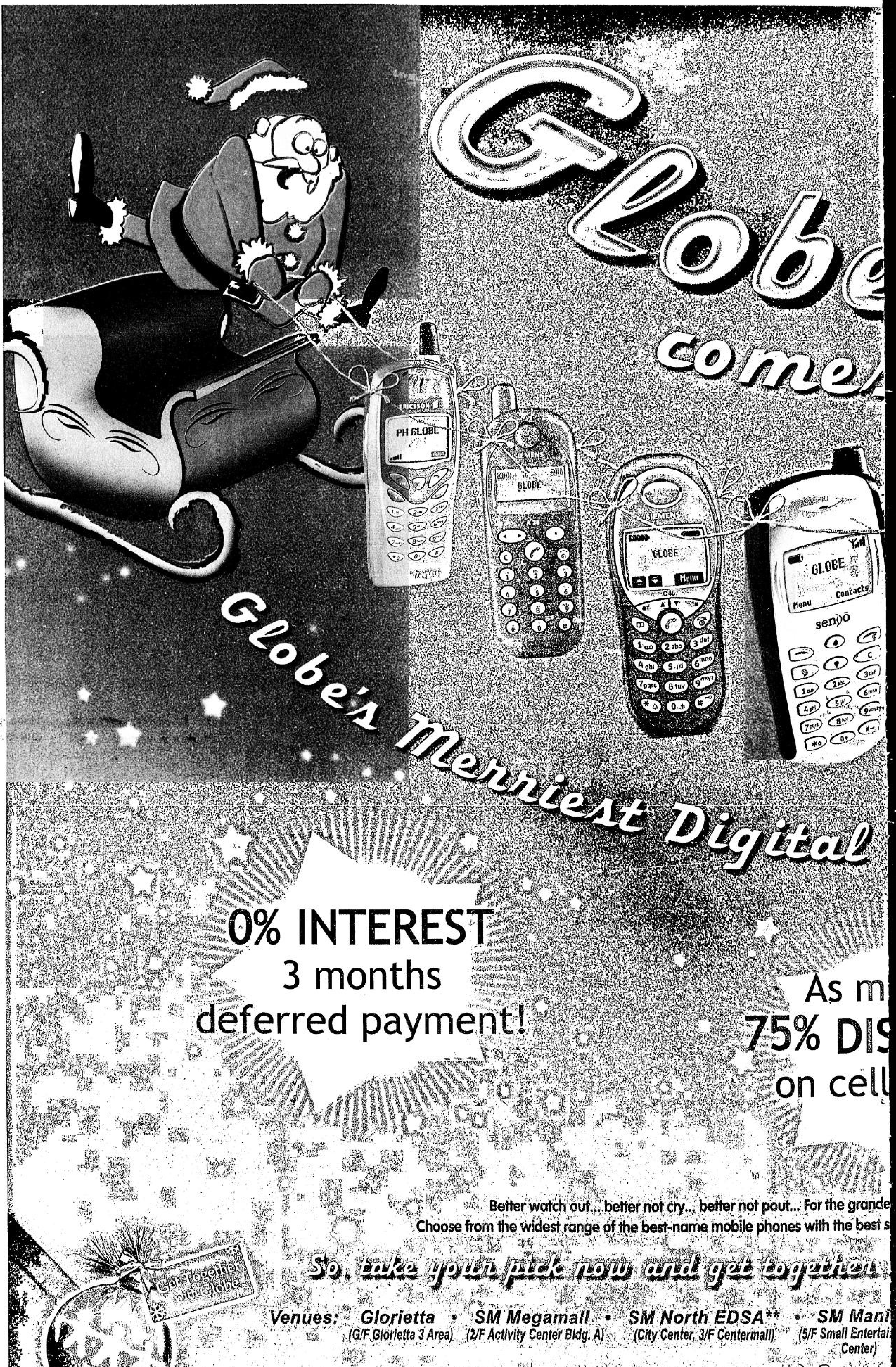

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HK filmmakers seek greater access to Chinese cinemas

By Tan Ee Lyn

CHAN. His "Rumble in the Bronx" was a big hit in China.

HONG KONG—Hong Kong movie industry chiefs will visit Beijing in January to try to get more of the territory's films screened across the vast Chinese mainland.

Mainland market

Local filmmakers have long wanted to pry open the mainland market, which could easily more than double the box-office of an average movie shown only in Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Woody Tsung of the Motion Picture Industry Association (MPIA) said China should no longer lump Hong Kong films with hundreds of other "foreign" movies that have to fight to be one of only 20 titles to make it on to Chinese screens each year under the mainland's quota system.

"Hong Kong is now part of China. Shouldn't Hong Kong films be classified as Chinese? Calling Hong Kong films foreign just doesn't make sense," said MPIA chief executive Tsung, referring to Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule in July 1997.

"Hong Kong films can't be made to compete for the 20 slots."

Quota system

Less than a handful of Hong Kong films are shown in Chinese cinemas each year under the quota system, which keeps unwelcome foreign influences at bay and protects the domestic film industry.

Local filmmakers sometimes enter into joint ventures with Chinese producers to secure release on the mainland, but that subjects their movies, even versions to be released overseas, to mainland censors.

But for the few that manage to muscle their way in to the mainland market the rewards are handsome. Top kung fu star Jackie Chan's "Rumble in the Bronx" pocketed up to HK$60 million ($7.7 million) in box-office receipts on the Chinese mainland when it was released in 1996, compared to just HK$40 million in Hong Kong.

The visit, arranged by China's Liaison Office in Hong Kong, will allow Hong Kong film industry representatives to meet with officials from the Ministry of Culture, State Copyright Administration and State Administration of Radio, Film and Television.

Economic downturn

Trapped in its second economic downturn in four years, the film industry, much like the rest of Hong Kong, is seeking help from China, one of a very few places in the region that is still boasting comparatively robust growth.

While the mood in Hong Kong prior to the 1997 handover to China was one of suspicion, even trepidation, industry leaders are now unabashedly asking for favors from Beijing.

These include allowing more mainland tourists into Hong Kong, preferential treatment for Hong Kong companies, even allowing the territory to host one or two Olympic events in 2008.

Greater presence

Tsung says Hong Kong productions should be classified simply as Chinese, or given a quota of their own, and argues that a greater presence of the territory's films would only help improve the quality of China-made movies.

"The Chinese market is very important to Hong Kong films and vice-versa. Apart from the very few arthouse movies in China, mainland productions and distribution are very poor in quality.

If we work together, the result could only be good," said Tsung.

Recovering from the doldrums of the late 1990s now that copyright piracy is less prevalent, filmmaking in Hong Kong may also get a vital boost if it is assured of audiences on the Chinese mainland, he said.

"If there is a stable market, investors may decide to increase their investments, such as in hi-tech effects," he said.

Gangsters

Hong Kong makes around 150 movies each year. The vibrant industry, which enjoyed a golden era in the 1980s and early 1990s, took a dive from the mid 90s when gangsters muscled on to the set, sending traditional investors fleeing.

Most movies made in recent years were low-budget and of such poor quality that they never made it to cinemas. It was only in the last year or so that authorities have managed to keep gangsterism and copyright piracy in check, leading to the return of genuine investors. *Reuters*

Newest batch of 'Bayaning Filipino' awardees named

IN awards ceremonies held last Nov. 16 and broadcast over ABS-CBN Presents last Nov. 18, ABS-CBN and the Ugat Foundation handed out the latest batch of Bayaning Pilipino Awards (Gawad Geny Lopez) to this year's worthy participants.

Pride

Two farmers' cooperatives from Boloc-Boloc, Negros Oriental are now the pride of their communities after tying as the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Samahang Pilipino 2001. Boloc-Boloc Farmers' Association (Bofas) began as a group of 30 farmers with the goal to bring water back to Boloc-Boloc's tiny farming community. Now Bofas helps improve the quality of life among the town's farmers, implementing programs in agro-forestry, hog and swine dispersal, corn plantation, cooperative store and apiculture to diversify their interests.

Meanwhile, co-winner Boloc-Boloc Dauin Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Bodamco) was honored for its 27-year track record in helping Boloc-Boloc. Over the years, Bodamco has spearheaded the construction of toilet facilities, health centers, and a daycare center, and set up programs in cow fattening and piglet dispersal.

A government employee, a market vendor, and their extraordinary family are the winners of this year's Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pamilyang Pilipino 2001. Felix Par, an employee of the Department of the Agrarian Reform, and his wife Natividad, a meat vendor at a public market, took to heart their vocation to raise a family.

Seven daughters

Despite their poverty, Felix and Natividad raised, educated, supported and worked with seven daughters through their three-decade long marriage, often taking in laundry or selling goods to make money for the next school year.

In turn, their children have become strong, productive professionals—lawyers, teachers, social and NGO workers—who take their responsibility to the community seriously.

BAYANING Gurong Pilipino 2001 Marta Perez (left) with Bayaning Pilipino 2001 Purificacion Viernes.

Years ago, an orphan of war decided to dedicate her life to serving others. In 2001, she won the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino Sa Gitnang Silangan 2001. Social worker Agalyn Salah-Nagase, who came from the Muslim tribe of Sanggil, now makes her life in Japan as one of the founders of Kalipinan ng mga Filipinong Nagkakaisa (Kafin).

Despite that, she is still active in Muslim and Filipino women's causes in the Philippines. As executive director of the Moro Women's Center (MWC), Agalyn was instrumental in the campaign for justice for Sarah Balabagan, as well as the move to create more jobs for Muslims by promoting their handicrafts abroad.

At 69, teaching is more than just a profession for Marta Perez, the recipient of the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Gurong Pilipino 2001. Having started teaching more than 33 years ago, Marta is still actively teaching her regular Grade 4 class load and tutoring a special class for street children in Legaspi City on weekends, a heavy load even for teachers half her age.

Victim

A human rights victim retains her humanity by helping others—that is how Purificacion Viernes of General Santos City won as Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino 2001. Active in several community-uplifting programs, Nany Puring's home fell victim to military harassment in 1984. Miraculously, after losing her husband and two younger children, Nanay Puring found the strength to work for peace anew, taking part in the Muslim-Christian Dialogue for Peace.

Entertainer

At age 24, Marites Ogawa came to Japan as an entertainer, but the Lord had other surprises for Marites, because soon after, she began attending religious services inviting her old co-workers and other Filipinos living in Japan to renew their relationships with the Lord.

But nothing compares to the joy of seeing her Japanese husband baptized to Catholicism. To this end, the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino Sa Gitnang Silangan 2001-Special Award was given to Marites Ogawa of Japan.

Far from the image of a *datu* watching over his kingdom, Datu Ibrahim Panglas III has used his status as a ruler to become a leader. As the young mayor of Paglas, Maguindanao from 1988-1998, he transformed his town into a booming economic zone recognized by foreign investors.

He also supported various agrarian programs that created an agrarian community where there was once bloodshed and warfare. Because of these achievements, ABS-CBN has awarded the Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino Awards 2001 Special Award to Datu Ibrahim Paglas III of ARMM.

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"HARRY POTTER." The magic wasn't potent enough.

'Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone' is astonishingly faithful to the book

By Noelani Torre

WE shrieked, jumped up and down, and danced grace less jigs across our living room floor when we found out that we'd finally get the chance to see "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (and days before everybody else would, at that).

Main character

Not exactly dignified behavior from people above 12 but, this was Harry Potter, after all. Who's only the main character in the four (so far) wildly popular books by J.K. Rowling. Who's only one of the richest women in Britain at the moment because of Harry Potter. The same Harry Potter who dominated the New York Times bestseller list for the past few years, and whose story everyone's been devouring in unprecedented numbers (Book four, "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," sold out the largest first printing in US publishing history: 3.8 million copies)!

Needless to say, we had caught the Potter bug and, along with millions of others similarly affected, we had been eagerly but at the same time rather fretfully anticipating the release of the movie version of "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"—because film adaptations of well-loved books don't exactly have a high success rate, do they? Take the film version of Roald Dahl's "Matilda." We loathed it.

Milieu

More so perhaps than the other viewers who hadn't read and loved the book. The movie's makers had Americanized the whole setting, even the characters, and this is one of the biggest mistakes anyone can make, especially when a lot depends on the British-ness of the milieu, as it does in "Harry Potter."

"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" ("Philosopher's Stone" in the British edition) is the first in a series of seven books detailing Harry Potter's transformation from a lonely orphan boy to a powerful wizard.

This is the book that launched the craze, where we first meet Harry and learn about "muggles" (non-magic folk), the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, and magic, of course. Anyway, we're sure you know all about that already.

So there we were, on the edge of our seat, waiting with mingled excitement and trepidation for the film to begin. When it did, we leaned back and prepared to be transported into Harry's world, which didn't exactly happen. The fault was ours at first, as we were too busy cataloguing the changes—small ones like the absence of Piers Polkiss and Peeves the poltergeist (though some would say the latter is a big loss), instead of actually sitting back and enjoying the movie.

And we did appreciate it, after the first few scenes, but not, unfortunately, with the same deep-seated enjoyment as we did the book.

Director Chris Columbus ("Home Alone," "Mrs. Doubtfire," and "Gremlins" fame) did remain astonishingly faithful to the book considering the time constraints he had, and he didn't Americanize anything as we feared.

Adult cast

The adult cast, made up of marvelous British character actors, was superb. Richard Harris was suitably wise and majestic as headmaster Albus Dumbledore, and Maggie Smith's Prof. Minerva McGonagall was as stern as any Potter fan could wish her to be.

We were most impressed though with Alan Rickman's malevolent performance as Prof. Severus Snape and Robbie Coltrane's portrayal of the bear-like but soft-hearted gamekeeper Rubeus Hagrid.

The special effects were also quite impressive. "Eye-popping," "dazzling" and "captivating" were some of the words critics have used, and we can't find anything better to describe them. The candles floating in mid-air in Hogwarts' Great Hall were breathtaking in their simplicity, and the Quidditch match, with the players whizzing around on broomsticks 50 feet from the ground, was an absolute thrill to watch.

So, one might ask, what was it then that we found lacking? For one thing, Voldemort er, sorry, You-Know-Who, wasn't as forceful as we wanted him to be, and not at all scary, to tell the truth. Still, perhaps younger kids will find him sufficiently so.

Joyous discovery

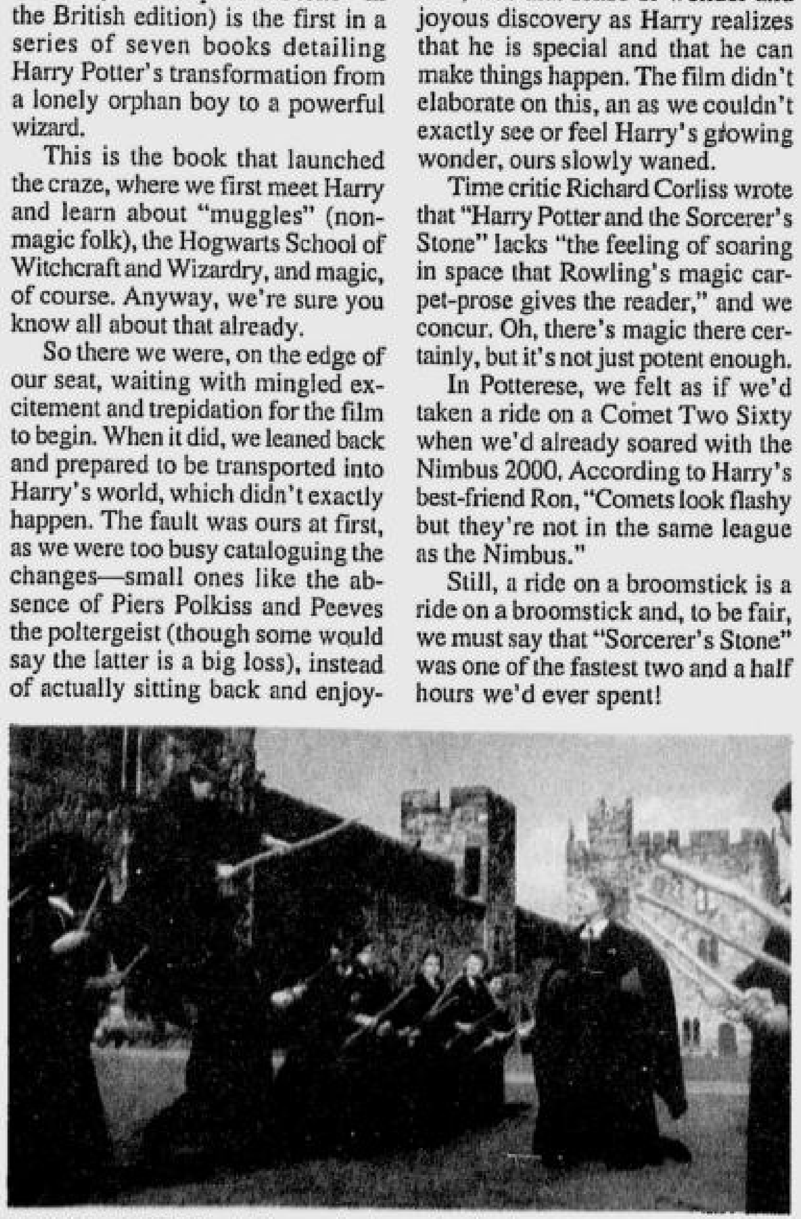
What we were really looking for throughout the film, and didn't quite find, was that sense of wonder and joyous discovery as Harry realizes that he is special and that he can make things happen. The film didn't elaborate on this, an as we couldn't exactly see or feel Harry's growing wonder, ours slowly waned.

Time critic Richard Corliss wrote that "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" lacks "the feeling of soaring in space that Rowling's magic carpet-prose gives the reader," and we concur. Oh, there's magic there certainly, but it's not just potent enough.

In Potterese, we felt as if we'd taken a ride on a Comet Two Sixty when we'd already soared with the Nimbus 2000. According to Harry's best-friend Ron, "Comets look flashy but they're not in the same league as the Nimbus."

Still, a ride on a broomstick is a ride on a broomstick and, to be fair, we must say that "Sorcerer's Stone" was one of the fastest two and a half hours we'd ever spent!

> The candles floating in mid-air were breathtaking in their simplicity



THE STUDENTS at Hogwarts learn to fly their broomsticks.

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2. Non-winning Image Model and Lucky Searcher entries are also qualified for the draws. So send as many entries as you can!

* *Entries must be received at least 5 days before the screening/draw dates: (1st) Jan. 16, 2002; (2nd) Mar. 18, 2002; (3rd) May 16, 2002*

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Criteria for pre-screening:
Photogenic quality and image projection - 50%
Beauty (*For males: Appeal*) - 50%
Must possess a beautiful (or handsome) face with clear complexion.

Selection of Finalists:
Only 10 final candidates (5 males, 5 females) who meet the cut-off score of 85% will be chosen for the final judging.

Final Image Model candidates and their Lucky Searchers (if any) will be notified by registered mail. They must confirm their participation on or before May 24, 2002.

The Lucky Searchers will have to show their registered mail and present a valid ID on the screening date.

Final Screening:
The 10 official candidates will undergo VTR and photo sessions on May 31, 2002 at Horizon Edsa Hotel. Judges will determine the official HDP Image Models.

Criteria for final screening:
Personality - 50%
Beauty (Appeal for Males) - 40%
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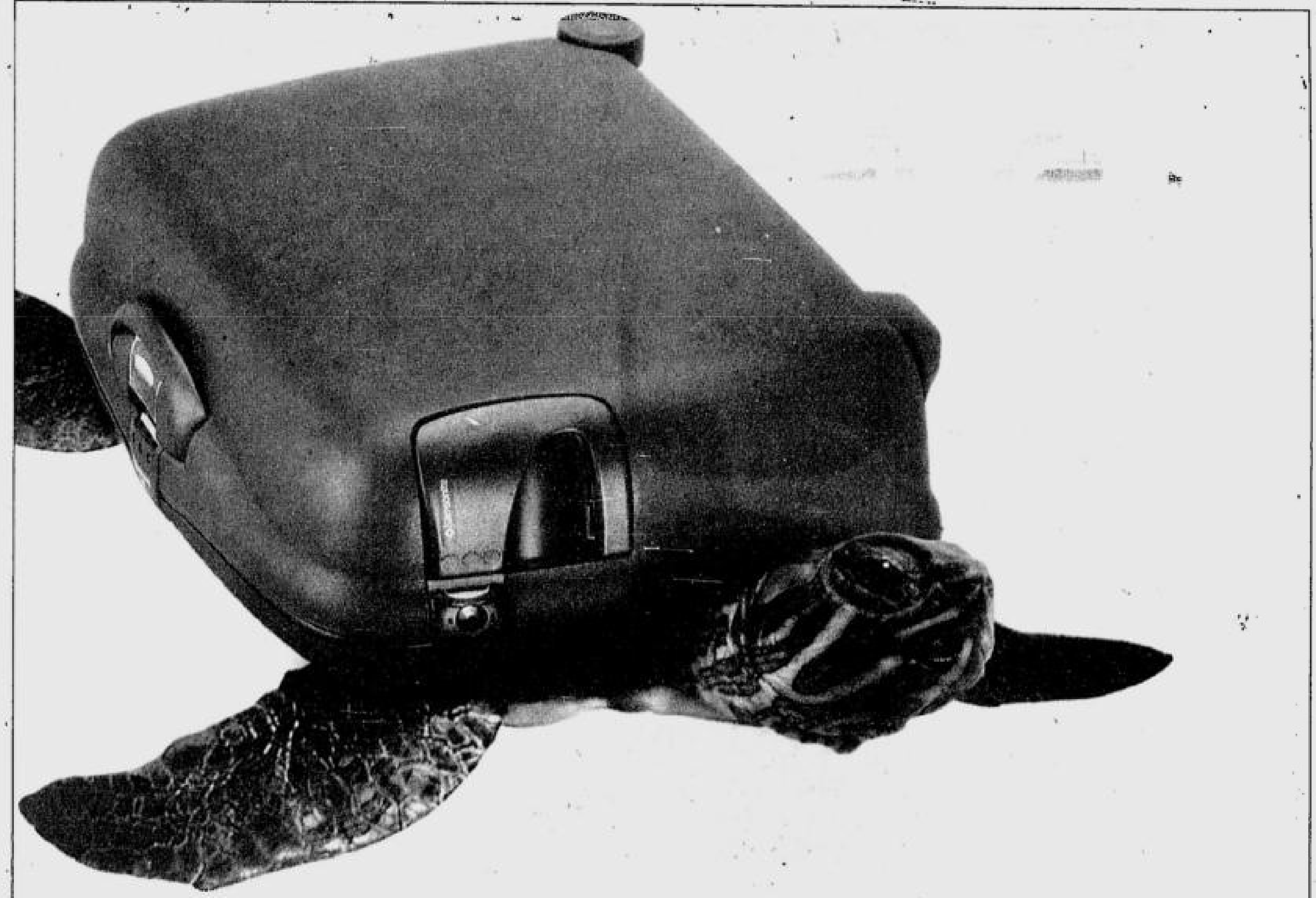

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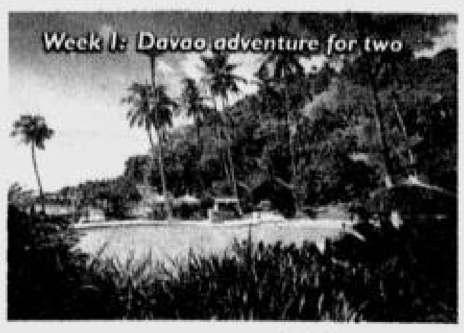
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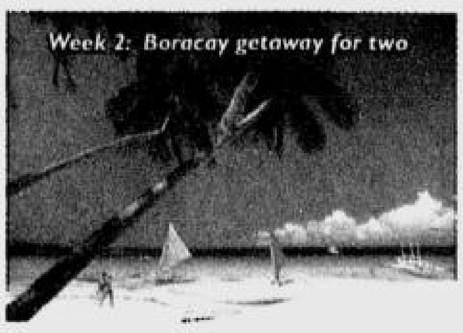
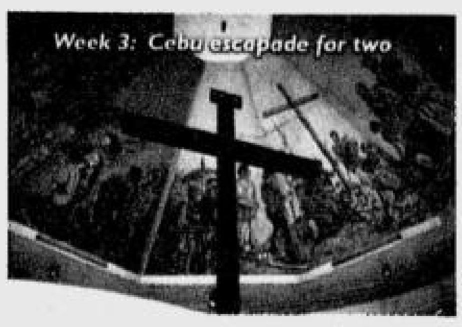
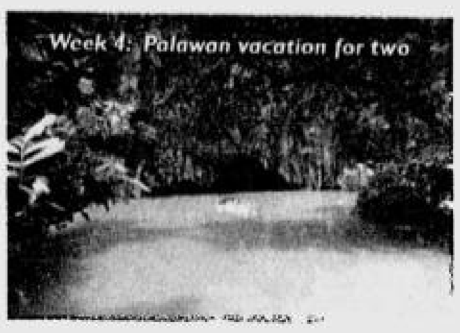

Week 2: Boracay getaway for two


Week 3: Cebu escapade for two


Week 4: Palawan vacation for two

Globe HANDYPHONE

Text Away to Getaway!

Win in the weekly draw!

Win in the grand draw!

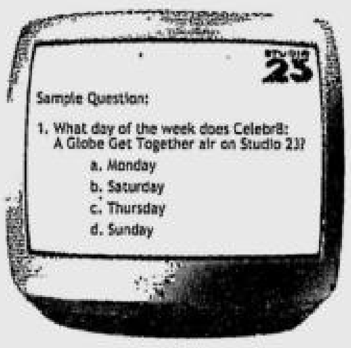
Trip for 4 to Australia courtesy of
CATHAY PACIFIC
Ford Expedition for family outings!
Ford Explorer Sport Trac for road trips with friends!

Here's how you can join:

Step 1: Watch Celebr8 on Studio23, Thursday, December 6 at 9pm.

celebr8
A Globe Get-Together

Step 2: Wait for the four multiple-choice trivia questions that will be flashed at random during the show.

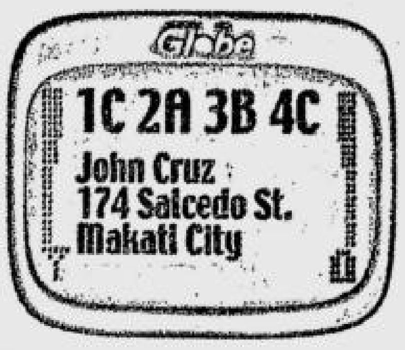


Sample Question:

1. What day of the week does Celebr8: A Globe Get Together air on Studio 23?
   - a. Monday
   - b. Saturday
   - c. Thursday
   - d. Sunday

Step 3: Key-in your answer to all four (4) questions, along with your name and address. Follow the format shown below.

Format sample: 1C_2A_3B_4D_First Name_Last Name_Address


Globe
1C 2A 3B 4C
John Cruz
174 Salcedo St.
Makati City

Step 4: Send your complete set of answers to 2378. The hosts will give you the signal when to start texting in your answers. You qualify for the weekly and grand draw for each text message you send with the correct set of answers.

What else you need to know

How many times can I send an entry?

You may text in your correct answers up to 20 times per show/week. On your 21st correct text message, you shall receive the text message: "You have exceeded the maximum number of entries. Please try again by watching the show next week. Thank you." Each text message shall be charged an entry fee of P10.00. Watch all four shows and send in as many as 80 correct entries.

How do I know if I sent in the correct answer?

If your answers to all four (4) questions, in each show, are correct, you will receive this text message from 2378: "Congratulations! You have the correct answers to our questions! You now qualify in the weekly and grand draws!"

If your answer is incorrect, you will receive this text message from 2378: "Your answer is incorrect. Please re-type the answers with the correct sequence and send to 2378 again."

So, only text entries with correct answers and its sequence shall be considered as qualified for the contest.

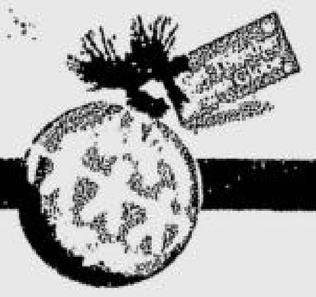
Who will qualify for the weekly and grand draw?

All Globe Handyphone subscribers who texted in the correct answer are qualified in the weekly and grand draws which will be conducted via an Electronic Draw. If you qualify, your Globe Handyphone number will be stored in the database of correct and valid entries and will be included in the Electronic Draw.

Schedule for texting in entries:

For the weekly draw, you may text in your correct answers for each episode until the following day.

For the grand draw, you may text in your correct answers until December 11. All correct non-winning entries from the weekly draws are automatically qualified in the grand draw.



celebr8
A Globe Get-Together

See posters and flyers for more details.

clip this coupon, grab a friend and
get in for FREE!
CHRISTMAS @2001
shop expo
Hall C, World Trade Center • DEC 1: 10AM-6PM • DEC 2: 10AM-8PM
For inquiries pls. call 620-4328
This project is co-presented by GMA Network & Call
for the benefit of Bantayog Ng Mga Bayani Foundation

Saturday SPECIAL

clip this coupon, grab a friend and
get in for FREE!
CHRISTMAS @2001
shop expo
Hall C, World Trade Center • DEC 1: 10AM-6PM • DEC 2: 10AM-8PM
For inquiries pls. call 620-4328
This project is co-presented by GMA Network & Call
for the benefit of Bantayog Ng Mga Bayani Foundation

MTV Asia bares nominees for 2001 awards

MTV Asia has unveiled the nominees for its inaugural MTV Asia Awards to be held at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on Feb. 2, 2002. Nominees for each category have been compiled from votes of key figures from the Asian music, entertainment and fashion industries.

Winners will be revealed at the ceremony which will be viewed by a live audience of more than 7,000 fans. The complete show will be seen by over 150 million viewers across Asia, with highlights being telecast on MTV's channels around the world.

Viewers' choices

SPEARS. Favorite Female Artist finalist.

MARTIN. Nominated in the Favorite Male Artist category.

Awards honor viewers' choices of the most popular artists or artistic creations. Categories include 11 "favorite music artist" awards from territories around Asia, six "international music" awards, one "Fashion," one "Film" and one "Inspiration" award.

Some of the nominees are: Favorite Music Artist (Philippines)—Freestyle, Gary Valenciano, Lea Salonga, Martin Nievera and Regine Velasquez; International Categories—Favorite Male Artist—Eminem, Ricky Martin, Robbie Williams, Ronan Keating, Shaggy; Favorite Female Artist—Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Jennifer Lopez, Madonna, Mariah Carey; Favorite Pop Act—Backstreet Boys, Destiny's Child, M2M, N'Sync, Westlife; Favorite Rock Act—Bon Jovi, Coldplay, Limp Bizkit, Linkin Park, U2;

Favorite Video—"The Call" (Backstreet Boys), "Weapon of Choke" (Fatboy Slim); "19-2000" (Gonilaz), "POP" (N'Sync); "Lady Marmalade" (Pink, Christina Aguilera, Mya, Lil' Kim); Favorite Film ("Charlie's Angels," "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," "Rush Hour 2," "Pearl Harbor," "Shrek," "The Mummy Returns").

Latest updates

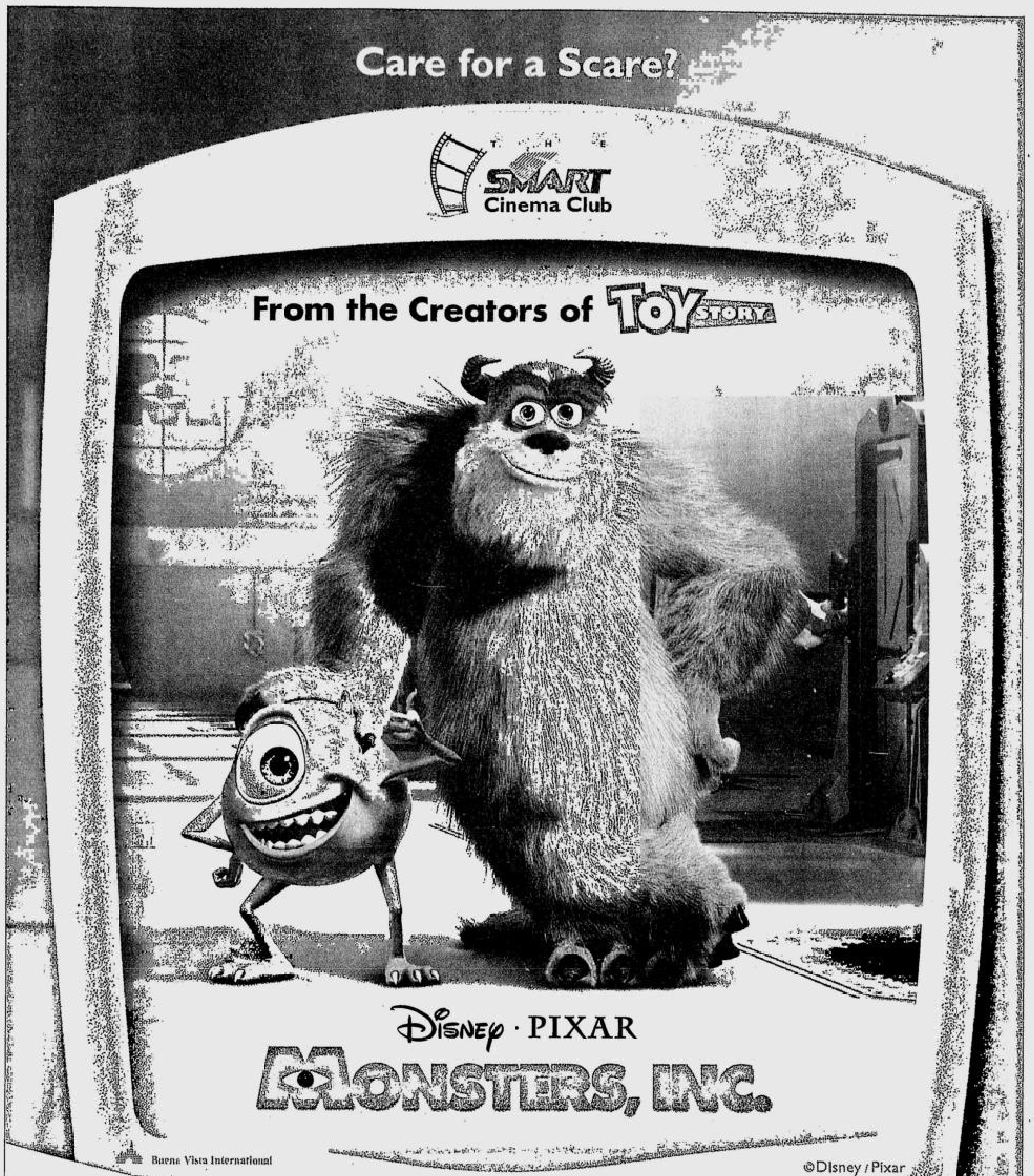
Fans can get more information about the show and nominees as well as the latest updates on the MTV Asia Awards from the official website, www.mtvasiaawards.com.

The nominees for each category will be promoted on MTV's six channels and online sites across Asia. All award categories (except for the "Inspiration"' award) will be selected by viewers and fans in 10 markets through an open poll from Nov. 12, 2001 till Jan. 18, 2002.

Viewers can vote online at www.mtvasiaawards.com or at local voting partners like Italianni's Restaurant, Outback Restaurant, TGI Fridays, Sari-Sari, Music One, Odyssey, Tower Records, Oxygen and Penshoppe branches.

The "Inspiration" award will be a special honor presented by MTV to either an inspiring individual whom young adults across Asia admire, or to an organization that has contributed to the betterment of Asian youth and the region as a whole. The nominees for Favorite Artist, Pop and Favorite Artist, and Film from India will be announced at a later date.

SALONGA. Favorite Music Artist nominee for the Philippines.



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Join the Smart Cinema Club now and get access to exclusive logos, group graphics, picture messages, screen savers, and test!

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monsmikelogo! (Operator Logo/Group Graphic)

To join, key in **JOIN CINEMA**. Once a member, you can download Disney/Pixar Monsters, Inc. *picture messages* (key in **PIC MONS** for list of keywords, and **PIC** <keyword> to download), *logos** (key in **LOGO MONS** for list of logos, and **LOGO** <keyword> to download), *group graphics** (key in **GROUP MONS** for list of keywords, and **GROUP** <keyword> to download), *screen savers*** (key in **SAVER MONS** for list of keywords, and **SAVER** <keyword> to download), or experiment with the personality test below. If you need more info, key in **HELP** <command>. Send all commands to 239.

What type of monster are you?
Take this test to find out! Simply key in **PLAY MONS** and send to 239 to get a series of questions. Answer them by pressing **REPLY** and the number <1, 2, 3, or 4> corresponding to your choice. Press **SEND.**
Ex. Fave monster cartoon!
1. Casper
2. Addams Family
3. Monsters, Inc.
After finishing the test, we'll tell you what type of monster you are!

Logos, graphics, picture messages, and screen savers are P15.00 each. All other text messages will be charged P2.50 each.
Note: If you're already playing a Smart Cinema Club game, quit first before you start the personality test. To quit, key in QUIT and send to 239.
*Available on selected Nokia handsets only
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SMART Simply Amazing!
Use your Smart Money to buy tickets in a flash and watch movies without cash

See fireworks light up the night sky.
Fireworks shows at Ayala Center Makati every Friday at 8 p.m. and every Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. from November 23 to December 22 at the Glorietta 4 Park. At the Alabang Town Center, it's on every Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. from December 1 to 30 at the Town Plaza.
AYALA CENTER GLORIETTA 4 GREENBELT
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
AYALA CENTER CEBU

SWITCHING CHANNELS

Globe pays tribute to movie music on Studio 23

By Edmund L. Sicam

WHEN we were invited to watch "Silver Screen," the fourth episode of Globe's "Celeb8-A Globe Get Together" at the Meralco Theater, we expected to hear the usual songs from the movies, like the "Titanic" love theme, "How Can I Live Without You" from "ConAir" or "Up Where We Belong" from "Dirty Dancing." We were pleasantly surprised, however, to listen to a repertoire of movie themes seldom performed in concerts.

Starting with the opening number, Ennio Morricone's scores from "Cinema Paradiso," "Malena," and "Love Affair" interpreted by Gerard Salonga and his Philippine Pop Orchestra, the show was noteworthy because of its choice of materials and the talented singers who interpreted the movie themes.

It's always a thrill watching Anna Fegi, Robert Seña, Isay Alvarez and Audie Gemora. Audie seldom appears onstage anymore because of his management duties but that night, he showed everyone that he still had what it takes to perform in a concert, despite the difficult numbers assigned to him. We noticed that the more challenging songs were given to the theater veterans like Audie, Ana, Robert and Isay.

This is not to say that the other artists, Ogie Alcasid, Vina Morales, Agot Isidro, Cris Villonco, Franco Laurel and Kevin Roy, didn't do a good job. They too deserved the applause given by the appreciative crowd.

The Globe special will be aired on Dec. 6 at 9 p.m. on Studio 23.

GMA's new soap

Soap operas must be doing well in the ratings. How else explain the decision of GMA-7 to come up with another soap, "Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga" which premieres on Monday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.? The network also came up with a unique way to promote the series: You've probably noticed this billboard on Edsa, featuring the disfigured face of a woman with the caption "*Mukhang maganda*" and wondered whether it was an ad for a beauty product or Dr. Vicky Belo.

Wonder no more. It's a teaser for GMA's latest soap and the woman on the billboard is Tanya Garcia, who will be targeted for oppression by all the bad girls in the show. She is paired off with Dingdong Dantes, who finally gets a lead part in a regular show.

The soap also features the reunion of Bobby Andrews and Angelu de Leon, who have not appeared together in the last four years, except for a recent episode of the "Larawan" series.

Dingdong plays the wealthy son of Elizabeth Oropesa, and falls in love with Tanya, a factory worker. La Oropesa doesn't like Tanya for her son and wants him to marry a girl with the same social status. Will Dingdong allow his mother to forever run his life or will he go against her and fight for the woman he truly loves?

Other stars featured in "Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga" which is the title of a song composed by Cecile Azarcon, are Tirso Cruz III, Chinggoy Alonso, Meryll Soriano, Cheska Garcia, Lala Montelibano and Jaclyn Jose.

Lala is making a comeback after a long absence. She used to appear in a lot of sexy movies, way back when.

Lunch with five beauty queens

VINA Morales was one of the singers who interpreted songs from films in the "Silver Screen" show at Meralco Theater.

GMA-7 recently aired the coronation night of the Miss Asia Pacific Quest 2001 which was won by Miss Peru, Luciana Farfan. On TV, the winners all shone in their regal evening gowns. Off camera, however, the gloss was gone but the beauty remained. This we found out when we met them over lunch at the National Sports Grill.

Our problem was trying to communicate with them. Miss Colombia, Karol Dela Torre (third runner-up) and Miss Mexico, Lizzett Jimenez (first runner-up) knew very little English and our Spanish was impossible. Miss Thailand, Wanvisa Kamdangyai (third runner-up) could get by with her English, while language was no problem for Miss Philippines, Darlene Carbungco (fourth runner-up).

Mercifully, Miss Peru could translate for the Latina beauties, which she didn't seem to mind doing, although she was now Miss Asia Pacific Quest. She's the most *kalog* of the group and was the first to line up for burger and fries when they got in.

More on our encounter next week.

Questions for "Band of Brothers" Episode 8

1. Both Liebgott and Webster spoke German. True or False?

2. How old was Eugene Jackson when he died of his wound? a. 16 b. 18 c. 20

3. Name the soldier who returns to Easy Company after being shot in the butt. a. Guanere b. Lipton c. Compton

Send all entries to "Switching Channels-Band of Brothers Contest," P.O. Box 512 Greenhills Post Office, San Juan, Metro Manila

Entries must be postmarked on or before Dec. 8, 2001. Winners will be announced on Dec. 15.

The following are the answers and winners for Episode 5:

Answers—1. a. Trigger 2. b. Silinsky 3. a. Paris

Winners—Marlowe Esmero, Preciosa B. Linghon, Kristine Lim, Renz Erta, Andrew Lino Cabrera, Sheila Ecle, Roberto Halili Jr.

Winners will receive official "Band of Brothers" T-shirts. They have all been notified.

'Harry Potter' scores the year's biggest opening

"POTTERMANIA" ruled the Philippines as Warner Bros.' family adventure "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" made motion picture history and shattered numerous industry records, earning a nationwide opening weekend gross of a phenomenal P58.2 million—the year's biggest debut eclipsing "The Mummy Returns" (P55 million).

This figure represents five-day (Nov. 21-25) box-office totals from some 145 theaters across the country, including Cebu, Iloilo, Davao, Cagayan de Oro, Bacolod, Pampanga, and Tarlac.

In Metro Manila, "Harry Potter" posted an amazing P45.2 million opening weekend gross on an unprecedented 106 screens, for a terrific P426,415 per-screen average.

New records

The much-anticipated film version of J.K. Rowling's international bestseller also established new records in the following categories: The second-biggest opening of all-time, surpassing "Titanic" (P43.6 million); the biggest November opening ever, beating "End of Days" and "Independence Day" which tied at P35.1 million; and the all-time biggest opening for a Warner Bros. title, erasing "Eraser's" record take of P31.3 million.

RADCLIFFE. Adventure of a lifetime.

The record-breaking opening of "Harry Potter" in the Philippines echoed the film's topgrossing debut in the United States, where it made every conceivable record magically disappear.

"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" tells the story of a boy (played by Daniel Radcliffe) who learns on his 11th birthday that he is the orphaned son of two powerful wizards and possesses unique magical powers of his own. Invited to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Harry embarks on the adventure of a lifetime. There, he finds the home and the family he never had.

Can we tell the kids Santa is sick this year?

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

TODAY is Dec. 1. Before, whenever this date loomed closer and closer, it pushed some kind of automatic button inside us that got us all excited and galvanized into a frenzy of preparations for the most awaited time of the year.

Malaise

Indeed, it's that season once more. (Yeah, right!) Christmas is in the air. (Ho-Hum…) But we are no longer as thrilled as before. Even the children seem less agog about the coming Yuletide than in the past. The evenings are longer, the mornings are colder, and all the fancy trimmings are there, but there's a general feeling of malaise.

Perhaps, this is due to several tumultuous events that happened this year which really shook us out of our comfort zones. We now feel that this is no longer the world we used to live in. Somehow, we proceed with our lives, but with the full knowledge that things are totally, irreversibly different now.

We began the year by marching in the streets to oust a president, which was closely followed by the so-called Edsa 3 revolution of the poor, which compelled us to gaze at our image in the mirror long and hard, taking stock of ourselves and not liking what we saw.

Then, we had the [illegible] tions. We tried valia[illegible] own destiny at the votin[illegible] [illegible]ts but, somehow, at the end [illegible] ay, we didn't feel very ecstatic about what our own hands had written.

Instability

The Abu Sayyaf problem worsened with daring kidnappings at Pearl Farm in Davao and at Dos Palmas. The fighting words of our president, who did try hard to talk tough, struck fear in our hearts for the instability they threatened for our future as a nation—but the bandits hardly trembled.

Then, Osama bin Laden and his band of terrorists attacked, forcing Uncle Sam to his knees, only to rise again, flinging fire and brimstone at Afghanistan's Taliban regime and the Al Qaeda network it coddled.

As all these were happening, our peso shrunk even further and we discovered that we could no longer enjoy the same things we did before, because we could no longer afford them. Worse,we look at the future and the uncertainty we see there feeds the fear that has made its home in our hearts.

We rail and rant about all this when, suddenly, Christmas knocks. What are we to do? Can we pretend we're happy? Can we fake gaiety? Can we act excited even as we wonder if our *noche buena* feast will still have the traditional *pata de jamon, galantina de gallo, lechon de leche* and *queso de bola?*

By the way, can we tell the kids Santa is sick this year?

Of course, Christmas is going to come anyway, regardless of whether we're prepared for it or not. The key question is, *how* do we prepare for it—especially this time around when we're up to *here* with fear and anxiety over the destitution not only of our pockets but also, seemingly, of our future.

Endless lists

Traditionally, we prepare for Christmas by giving material tokens to all the people we love—our immediate family and closest friends, *inaanaks* and *pamangkins,* officemates and business associates. We have endless lists of all their names with the things we'd like to buy for them. Each year, either the list gets shorter and shorter or the gifts we buy become less and less expensive.

For this year, I have a suggestion to make: Why don't we go through the people in our lists and, instead of buying gifts, let's ask gifts from them to be given to the less fortunate? Instead of focusing on our problems, why not on the blessings we have received that we can share with those who are not as blessed?

Like, the family of Pempe Rodrigo, with the help of the Rivers of Living Water ministry, has collected all kinds of donations and love offerings from relatives and f[illegible]ends which they will give to i[illegible] in the 14 barangays of [illegible] Asi[illegible] from the [illegible]t-givi[illegible] [illegible]cy [illegible] conduct a medical mission.

The Hope fo[illegible] World men's ministry is receiving donations of reading glasses which they will, in turn, give to the more than 100 Cainta municipal jail inmates who have poor eyesight. A kind soul has given away bibles for the spiritual nourishment of these prisoners, but many can't read them due to impaired vision.

Gawad Kalinga areas

Of course, Couples for Christ has gone several steps further because their work with the poor is not only during Christmas, but everyday. So successful has their program been that they now have 60 of what they call Gawad Kalinga areas all over the country—including four in Metro Manila (at Bagong Silang in Caloocan City, CAA Compound in Parañaque City, Payatas in Quezon City and Smokey Mountain in Manila.

Everywhere we look these days, there are companies, organizations and institutions coming up with corporate gift-giving activities. Many banks, shopping malls, media networks and other companies have their own way of spreading the Christmas cheer.

In our small way, no matter how bad we think our situation is, we have it in us to start something that will similarly make a difference in the lives of those who are in much worse circumstances than we are.

This will go a long way in driving away the gloom we now feel over the sorry plight of our lives. When we help others, we realize the blessings God has given.

When each of us does something positive to contribute to the upliftment of others, we enkindle hope not only in those we help but also in our own lives.

We don't have to tell the kids that Santa is sick this year. Let's tell them, instead, that they can be little Santas to others!

"You're kidding!

Your kids know more about Word than you do?"

How can you teach your kids about computers when they know more than you do? In today's technology-oriented world, there's no escaping computers. So save yourself from embarrasment. Log on to theonlinecampus.com and learn more about office applications like Word, Excel and Powerpoint. Completely web-based and open 24-7. It's the school that lets you study at your own pace, according your schedule, wherever you may be. So you can keep pace with your wiz kids.

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AIG Credit Cards

We've got your family covered.

ENJOY THE HOLIDAYS THE PRACTICAL WAY

AIG Credit Cards puts together practical benefits this Christmas.

If you don't have an AIG Credit Card yet, you're missing out on a lot of savings!

It's that time of year when, all around us, we, Filipinos, buckle down, tackle Christmas, and have fun – seriously. No matter how good or bad it has been, we can never resist the smell of Christmas in the air; and we end up doing everything in our power to make the Holidays as special as we can. Nothing beats that smile on our children's faces when they get their special gifts, or the laughter generated by get-togethers of long-time friends and reunions among those we love. Such is the Filipino Christmas. Whatever happens, we will not allow anything to spoil our Holidays!

The stark reality, however, is our eternal wish – that Christmas need not be so bad on our pockets. Times like these, we need a practical way to go about our daily lives, and most importantly get on with the celebration of Christmas. So how do we enjoy the holidays the practical way? We budget our expenses properly, we look around for smart bargains, and we find creative ways to make our cash go a longer way.

Nowadays, using credit cards to do our shopping has become the easiest way to breeze through our purchases especially amidst all the Christmas frenzy at the malls. They're so much more convenient than having to bring a lot of cash, or needing to queue up at the ATMs everytime we spot a bargain. However, we still cannot fully enjoy the benefits of credit cards because, in the back of our minds, we're quite worried that enjoying too much now will lead to indebtedness later.

Supermarket Rebates with AIG's Value Grocer

Our cupboards and refrigerators definitely need our full attention every Christmas. At a time when our friends and relatives unexpectedly come to visit, or when our family gathers together in our homes just to enjoy the Holidays, we need all the sustenance at its festive best!

And how does AIG Credit Cards help us with this very basic need? We CAN celebrate at home and still enjoy more savings. AIG Credit Cards has once again launched another **FIRST** in the industry to give you Value Grocer. From November 10, 2001 to January 6, 2002, everytime you make P10,000 worth of single or accumulated purchases using your AIG Credit Cards in any supermarket, you **automatically earn cash rebates** in addition to the AI Club rewards points! No need for receipts to submit, or forms to fill out.

Whether you're purchasing ingredients for a feast fit for a king, or replenishing your regular household supplies, AIG Credit Cards rewards you with savings just by using your card for this basic chore. So next time you're in front of the supermarket check-out counter, **pull out your AIG Credit Card and enjoy savings that even cash purchases can't give you!**

The good news is –given the right credit card, you can enjoy savings everytime you spend! It's about time we get something back for everything we charge. It's tough enough that we deal with the high prices and the increased number of expense items on our list. We definitely need a break.

AIG Credit Cards can give you just that. If you still haven't gotten one, you're missing out on a lot of savings. While we can't help but pull out that piece of plastic when we make certain purchases this Season, think – **"Does my credit card give me savings everytime I use it?" With AIG Credit Cards, the answer is definitely YES! Suddenly, getting more for less has become an actual reality.**

Following are the unbelievable benefits that AIG Credit Cards has put together for only its cardholders to enjoy from October 2001 to January 6, 2002.

Exclusive Savings at SM Supermalls

AIG Credit Cards has teamed up with retail giant SM Supermalls to give the biggest savings and exclusive prizes to those who use their AIG Credit Cards this Season. Imagine **INSTANT TREATS just by racking up spending** on your AIG Credit Card, or get treated to **P1000.00 FREE shopping privilege** if the AIG Harlequin catches you "in the act!" Yup, AIG Credit Cards has converted the SM Supermalls into one big fairground where its cardholders enjoy Christmas a whole lot more!

15% Discount at Disney On Ice

AIG Credit Cards also treats its cardholders to an **exclusive 15% discount** to see Disney On Ice as it celebrates 100 Years of Disney Magic at the Araneta Coliseum. Christmas is for kids, indeed. And, no matter how difficult the times may be, Christmas goes on for kids – and we would love to gift them with all the traditional memories we had as kids during this Season. Bring the entire family and enjoy this traditional show with fun-filled savings.

Up to 40% Holiday Discounts

Discounts galore! Shop in participating merchants and enjoy as much as **40% OFF** on your Christmas shopping. So who says Christmas has to be expensive? AIG Credit Cards makes sure you get so many new ways to enjoy exclusive savings. Whether you're dining at your favorite restaurants or taking time off with special hotel packages, AIG Credit Cards will let you treat your family and friends in a way that is lightest on the pocket!

And, discounts haven't stopped pouring! AIG Credit Cards lets you enjoy savings even when you're dining at home! To enjoy AIG Credit Cards' Value Grocer program, simply shop at your neighborhood supermarket and AIG gives you **cash rebates!** There just seems to be savings everywhere you spend this Christmas Season!

Up to 80% Off at Members-Only-Sales

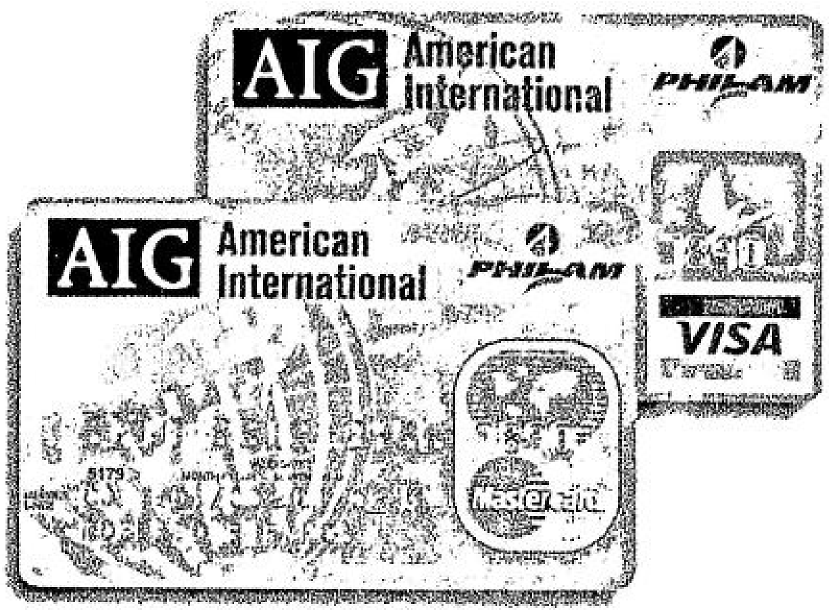
AIG Credit Cards isn't done with discounts yet! Once you're a cardholder, you get exclusive invitations to purchase specially discounted items up to 80% off during Members-Only Sales. This Season, the MOS's happen on November 21 to 25 for Designer Brands, and on December 5 to 9 for Christmas Gifts and Giveaways.

Installment Programs Let You Keep Your Cash

Big-ticket items and cash purchases need not make a big dent on your budget this season. Wouldn't it be great if we can bring home our dream appliances or buy that new piece of furniture that your mom's been pining for, and still keep your cash? We never know when we will need our cash for a rainy day.

Avail of as low as **0% interest** in AIG Credit Cards' Installment Craze. Or, get your cash back with interest rates as low as **1.6% per month** with AIG's Flexi-Installment facility. Not only has AIG given you easy ways to pay for your special purchases this season, they've also dropped the interest rates so you can enjoy your purchases even more!

You have to agree that Christmas has never had this much value. Enjoy the season with your friends and family in a way that only AIG Credit Cards can give you. It's high time that we be practical with the credit card that we use. AIG Credit Cards proudly lets you and your family enjoy life, at less cost!



AIG's BEST DEALS THIS SEASON ARE HERE!

Installment Craze

AS LOW AS 0% INTEREST ON INSTALLMENT RATES*

From November 14 to December 23, 2001

START YOUR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING IN THESE PARTICIPATING STORES NOW!

ABENSON
Ambassador Appliances
Anson Emporium
Automatic Centre
aiwa Showroom
AVID Sony Shop
AV Surfer
AVESCO
Clexis Jewellery, Inc.
BLIMS fine furniture
BELLS LIGHTING
Brochiere Computers
Chris
Chronos
Electroworld
Forty Winks
GIOIELLI
GLOBE TELECOM
HOUROGLASS CENTER
Listening Room
LUCERNE
play & display
Dark Lane
PINCTADA
Siuvoni Collections
Solar Lamps
SM Appliance Center
SOGO
SOGO Home & Office Center
east asia
TIMETREND
Washington
WESTERN
WORLDWIDE Audio · Video · Home Appliances
5th Ave Electronic City

PARTICIPATING MANUFACTURERS WITH 0% INTEREST* RATE OFFERS:

5th Ave Electronic City
AVESCO
aiwa
Clexis Jewellery, Inc.
BLIMS fine furniture
Canon Camera & Video
Electroworld
laGERMANIA
Pioneer
play & display
Dark Lane
SHARP
SONY
TEFAL
Whirlpool

- Enjoy reduced installment rates as low as 1.60% monthly for 12-month term; 1.80% monthly for 6 & 24-month terms & 2% monthly for 3-month term, for all other brands/models.
- Offers available at Metro Manila, Cavite, Laguna & Pampanga outlets of participating stores.
- Minimum amount for installment is Php5,000 (accumulated) or Php3,000 (single unit price).
- The special offers are applicable only when goods are purchased using an AIG Credit Card.
- All AIG Credit Card transactions are subject to normal credit authorization criteria upon purchase of goods/merchandise.

* 0% interest offered on selected items and terms at 3, 6 and/or 12 months
** Participating stores that offer reduced installment rates only
*** Available at Avid Sony Shop and AV Surfer outlets

DO YOU WANT THE ZERO INTEREST TOO BUT YOU DON'T HAVE AN AIG CREDIT CARD?
JUST APPLY NOW. THERE ARE 3 EASY WAYS!

1 DROP A CARD — Watch out for AIG representatives at selected SM Supermalls! Simply drop your business card and we'll take care of the rest! From October 26, 2001 to January 6, 2002

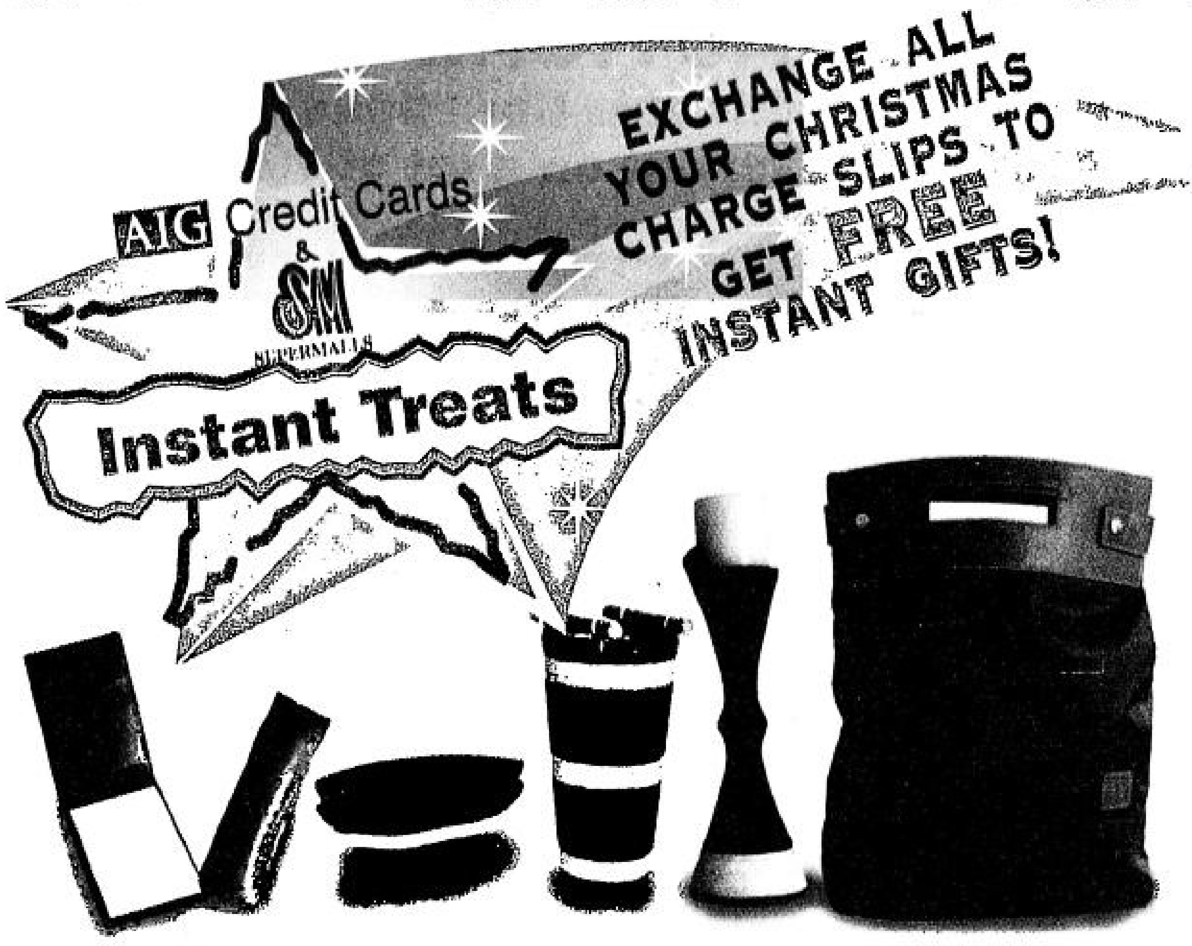
2 Apply By Phone now! Call 636-8700

3 AIG Credit Card application forms are available at any of the participating stores in the SM Supermalls

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3864, Series of 2001.

AIG Credit Cards

We've got your family covered.


EXCHANGE ALL YOUR CHRISTMAS CHARGE SLIPS TO GET FREE INSTANT GIFTS!
AIG Credit Cards
&
SM SUPERMALLS
Instant Treats

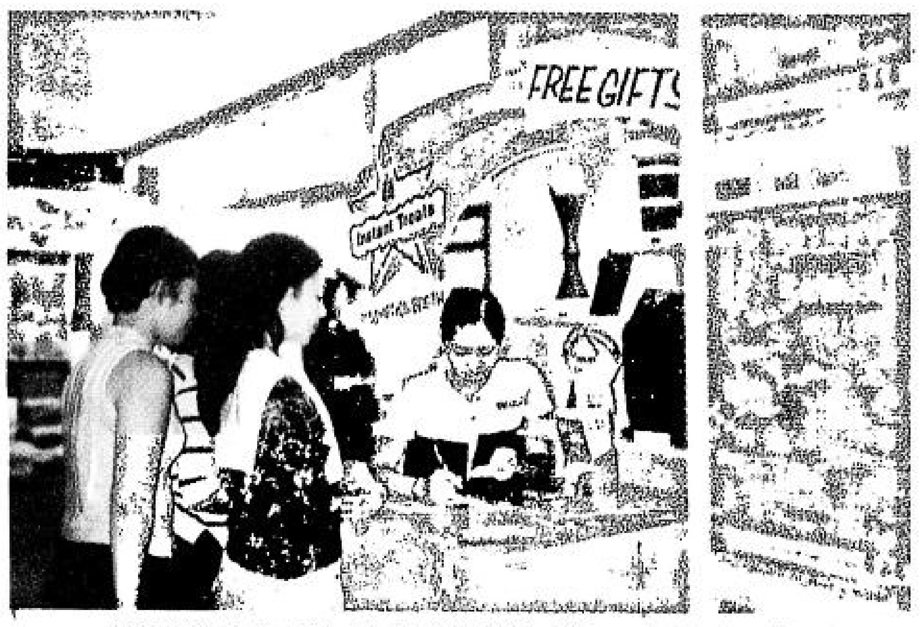
AIG Credit Cards rewards its cardholders with nicely-crafted leather items and unique home accessories in AIG's INSTANT TREATS.

AIG CARDHOLDERS REDEEM PRIZES AT SM SUPERMALLS

Introducing AIG Credit Cards' INSTANT TREATS!

A growing number of AIG Credit Cardholders have redeemed special prizes at the AIG Credit Cards' Instant Treats kiosk located at participating SM Supermalls. For a minimum spending level, these cardholders have already availed of prizes for their home or office.

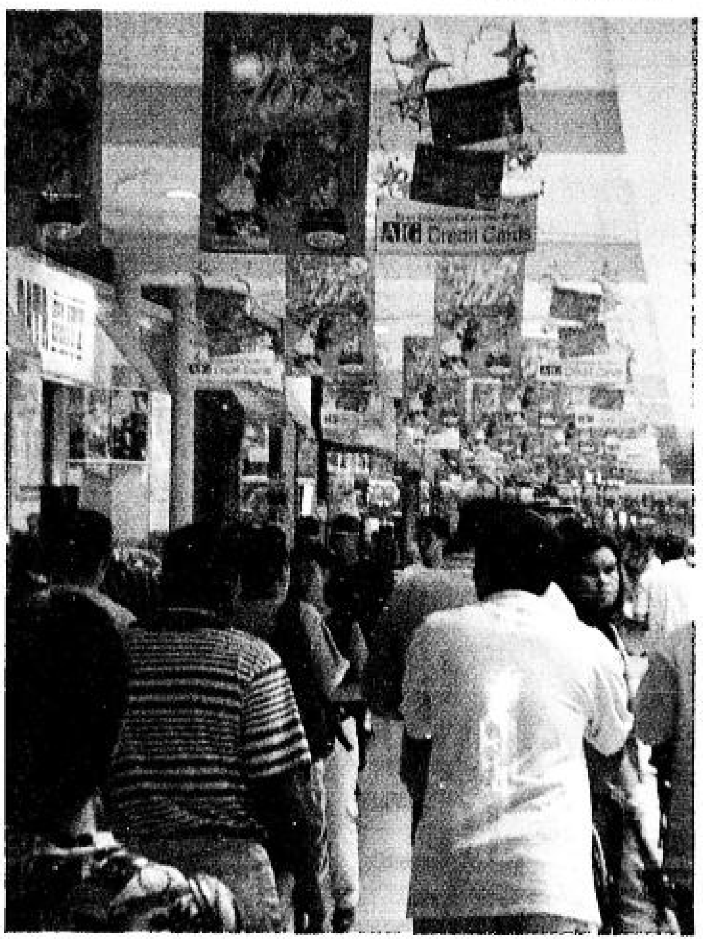
AIG Credit Cards rewards its cardholders with special prizes in addition to the many discounts and freebies that they already get from simply using their card this Christmas for all their Christmas spending in any store. So if you've racked up at least P15,000 on your AIG Credit Card this season, simply present your charge slips at the AIG Instant Treats booth at SM Supermalls. Nicely-crafted leather items and unique home accessories are yours for the taking on top of the AI Club rewards points. This is AIG's way of thanking you for your patronage this Season. So hurry! Use your AIG Credit Card now.



AIG Credit Cardholders visit the Instant Treats Booth at the SM Supermall to claim Instant Treats items.

FREE GIFT
Instant Treats
AIG Cred

SM Supermall shoppers give business cards to AIG DROP-A-CARD Representative to apply for an AIG Credit Card. It's that easy!



SM Supermalls are adorned by AIG Hang Signs and Mobiles highlighting the various programs in the SM-AIG Tie-up.

GOTCHA! YOU CAN WIN P1,000!

Watch out! You may just be the lucky winner of a P1000 SM Gift Certificate if you are caught using your AIG Credit Card at participating SM Supermall outlets. For the past few weekends, winners have already been pleasantly surprised to see a blue and yellow Harlequin approach them at check-out counters with gift certificates paying for their purchase. At the end of this Season, a total of 300 winners will enjoy this prize. You may be one of them!

Left: Maria Carmel Marfa, SM Sucat Card Hunt Winner of P1,000 worth of SM Gift Cheques with DTI Representative and the AIG Harlequin. **Top:** The AIG Harlequin at SM Megamall gives adults and kids a little entertainment treat .

AIG Cardholders Speak for Value

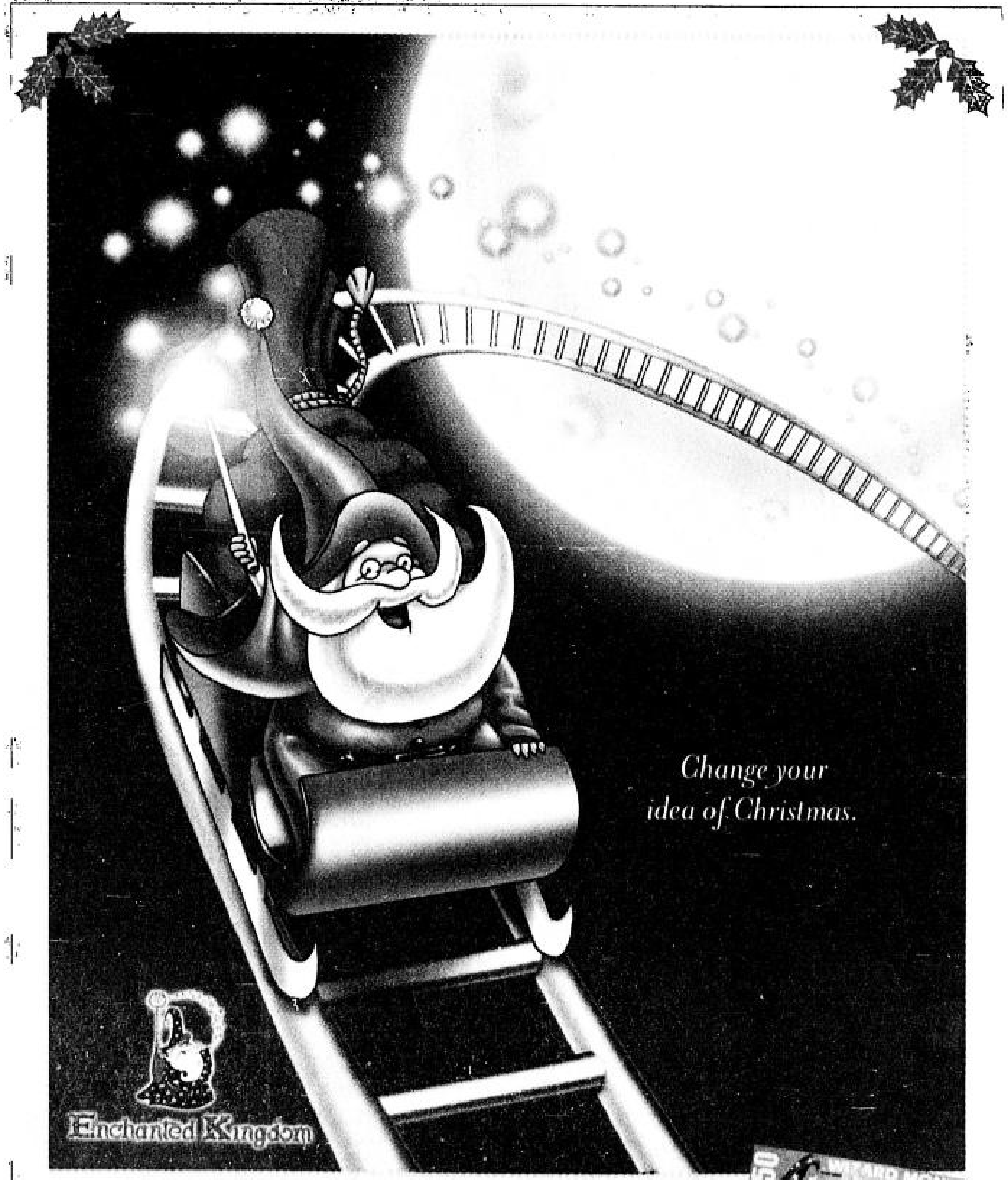
Maria Carmel Marfa, a Product Specialist at Johnson & Johnson Philippines and an AIG Cardholder for three years now, use her AIG Credit Cards in buying grocery, shopping and dining. Maria Carmel is one of the 300 winners of the AIG Card Hunt. When asked about her AIG Credit Cards, she said, "It's very convenient to use. And it was unbelievable when I won in one of their ongoing promotions at SM Supermalls, the AIG Card Hunt. I was spotted using my AIG Credit Card by the AIG Harlequin at Gingersnaps, where I went to buy some clothes for my son and shoes for myself. They gave me P1,000 worth of SM Gift Cheques and I was just overwhelmed! I remember reading about their upcoming events through mailers and I just couldn't believe that I actually won!"

"AIG cares for their Cardholders and that, what I think, is what makes them a cut above the rest."

"Very efficient!" That's what **Patricia Alvarado, Manager for Special Projects and Brand Development at Tanduay Distillers, Inc.** said about her AIG Credit Card.

"I have been using it since 1999 and I love the discounts, rebates and other benefits that I get every time I use my AIG Credit Card in shopping, dining and grocery, not to mention the medical and dental benefits that I (and even my family) enjoy. I most especially love Instant Treats where you can easily get items just by collecting your charge slips. The items are so charming and all you have to do is exchange your charge slips at the redemption booths and you get the items instantly!"

"AIG Credit Cards makes Christmas for me and my family more exciting because of all these benefits."


Change your idea of Christmas.
Enchanted Kingdom

P50
WIZARD MONEY
Enchanted Kingdom
P100
WIZARD MONEY
Enchanted Kingdom
50
P100

Make a complete turnaround from your usual Yuletide gifts. Start fresh with a gift idea that's simply magical. Take P150 worth of Wizard Money, Enchanted Kingdom's very own currency for buying food, drinks, souvenirs, and even entrance tickets. Throw in a Ride-All Ticket, and you have the Enchanted Kingdom Christmas Bundle. A P550 value specially priced at only P500. You can also get Wizard Money in denominations of P50 and P100. As far as gift ideas go, you'll find these absolutely refreshing. Not to mention thrilling.

The Enchanted Kingdom Christmas Bundle and Wizard Money are available only at the Makati Sales Office and the Sta. Rosa Front Gate. Discounts on bulk purchase also available. For inquiries, call tel nos. 8302111 to 17/8436073 to 77.

AIG Credit Cards

We've got your family covered.

100
AIG Credit Cards
WE SCARE BECAUSE WE CARE

AIG Credit Cards and SM Supermalls:

SHOPPING GIANTS GET TOGETHER FOR A VALUE-FILLED CHRISTMAS

AIG Credit Cards treats its cardholders to a Holiday Season filled with savings and freebies so everyone can have a value-filled Christmas! AIG Credit Cards is the only credit card company to team up with the country's shopping giant: SM Supermalls, to give its cardholders EXCLUSIVE shopping privileges never before enjoyed from any credit card this Season. So bring the whole family and treat them to Christmas shopping they will never forget!

There are several promotions that will happen inside SM Supermalls that will surely delight every cardholder. SM Supermalls will be a haven where the cardholders may claim their prizes upon presentation of their charge slips and win gift cheques when caught using their AIG Credit Cards. But this is just the start of a long term partnership since there will be more to come from AIG Credit Cards and SM Supermalls in 2002!

AIG Credit Cards and Enchanted Kingdom Give Amazing Discounts!

Time to enjoy the company of family and friends at the much-awaited yearly tie-up of AIG and that incredible park called Enchanted Kingdom! Purchase your tickets ahead with your AIG Credit Card and have something to smile about even before you get there! Not only do you avoid the long queue at the gate, you also get to purchase unlimited ride tickets for only P255 per person. That's P145.00 savings! Simply purchase your tickets at the Enchanted Kingdom Sales Office at G/F Tropical Palm Condominium, 103 De la Rosa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City between November 5 to January 31, 2002.

Enchanted Kingdom

Enjoying this Christmas need not be so expensive after all! You can treat loved ones and friends to a great day with the rides and games at Enchanted Kingdom for so much less this Season!

DISNEY ON ICE CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF DISNEY MAGIC

100
YEARS OF MAGIC

Have you ever dreamed of seeing all your favorite Disney characters come together in a celebration so magical that it takes your breath away? Well, Feld Entertainment – in cooperation with AIG Credit Cards – make all your dreams come true when Disney On Ice celebrates 100 Years of Disney Magic, coming to the Araneta Coliseum from December 22, 2001 to January 6, 2002. And, as an exclusive treat, AIG Credit Cardholders get 15% OFF on ticket prizes from October 5 to November 30, 2001.

AIG marketing officers with Mickey Mouse and the Binibining Pilipinas winners in a special photo during the Disney On Ice press launch.

Not an AIG Credit Cardholder yet? There's still time! AIG Credit Cards ensures immediate processing of your application and gives you three convenient ways to get a FREE AIG Credit Card:

1. **See them at AIG application kiosks inside SM Supermalls. Those who apply on the spot get special prizes;**

OR

2. **Drop your business card with designated AIG Credit Cards representatives who go around SM Supermalls.**

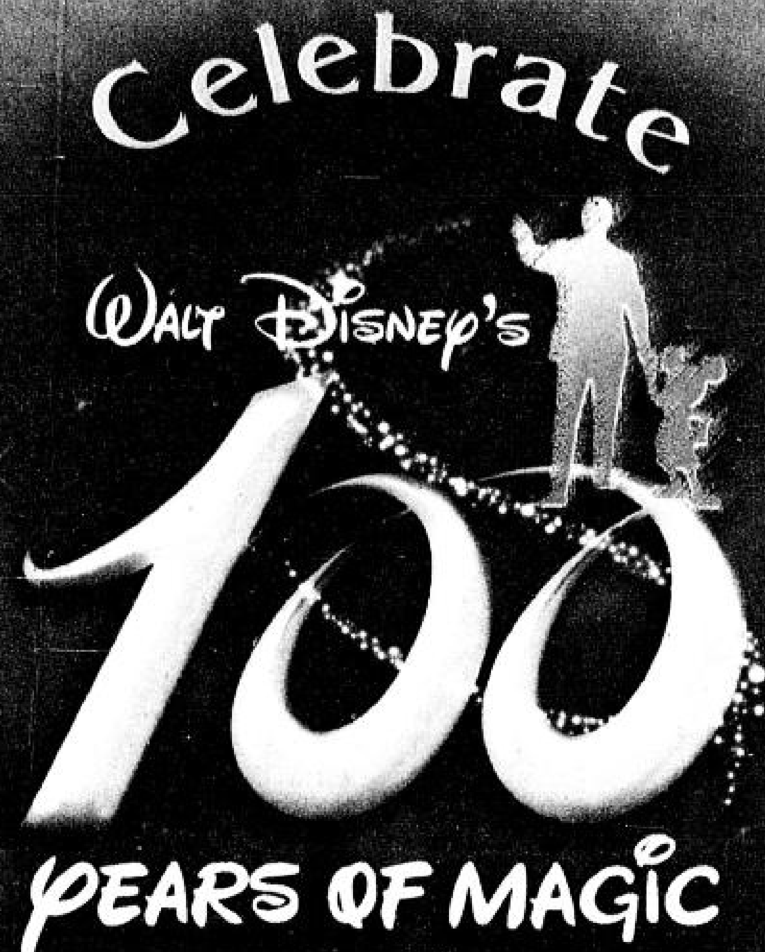
OR

3. **Call 636-8700 and our customer service representative will guide you through the rest!**

Hurry, apply now and be part of the AIG Christmas activities. For easy application, just give us charge slips of your other credit cards and we will process immediately in just seven days!

SM SUPERMALLS AIG Credit Cards

Celebrate



Walt Disney's 100 YEARS OF MAGIC

Nov. 5, 2001 - Jan. 6, 2002

Disney·PIXAR MONSTERS, INC.

Watch out for the MONSTERS, INC. invitational gala premiere, November 17 at SM Megamall.

Advance Screening Dates		MONSTROPOLIS (10 am - 9 pm)	
November 17	SM City Davao	Nov. 24 - 25	SM City North Edsa
November 26	SM City Cebu	Nov. 30 - Dec. 1 & 2	SM Megamall

Photo Opportunity with **MONSTERS, INC.** characters Mike & Sulley in life-size plush characters at SM Malls from Nov. 5 - Dec. 22

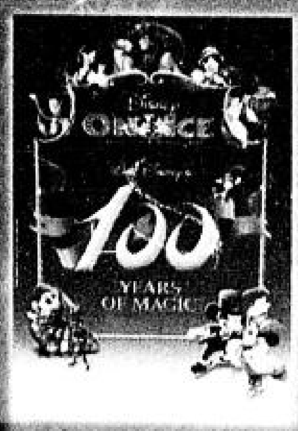
Test your Monster I.Q. with " Everybody Wants To Be A Monsternaire"

Join the MONSTERS, INC. Drawing Contest and create your own monster

Watch clips from the MONSTERS, INC. movie

Join the MONSTERS, INC. Tell Tale Storytelling Contest

See posters for details



See Mickey, Minnie, Genie and Mulan as they tour the SM Supermalls 11am / 3pm

Dec. 13	SM City Fairview	Dec. 15	SM Southmall
Dec. 14	SM Megamall	Dec. 16	SM City North Edsa

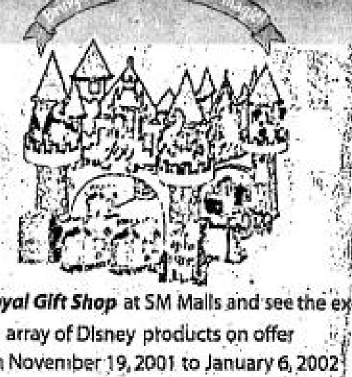
Join our interactive skating clinic with the stars of Disney on Ice at the SM Ice Skating Rink.

Dec. 18	SM Megamall	Dec. 26	SM Megamall
Dec. 19	SM Southmall	Dec. 27	SM Southmall
Dec. 20	SM Megamall		

See the magic.....

LIVE on Ice at the Araneta Coliseum from Dec. 22 to Jan. 6

Tickets available at SM Ticketnet. For Inquiries call 911-5555


Bring home a part of the magic

Visit the Royal Gift Shop at SM Malls and see the exciting array of Disney products on offer from November 19, 2001 to January 6, 2002

MEET 'N GREET

Meet and Greet Mickey, Donald, Pooh and Tigger on the following dates:

Nov. 29	SM City Pampanga	Dec. 3	SM City Manila
Nov. 30	SM Centerpoint	Dec. 6	SM City Iloilo
Dec. 1	SM Supercenter Sucat	Dec. 8	SM City Cebu
Dec. 2	SM City Bacoor	Dec. 10	SM City Davao

Sing and play along with songs from Disney on Ice (2:30 pm and 4pm)

Nov. 23 - 24	SM City Bacoor
Nov. 25 - 26	SM Southmall
Nov. 27 - 28	SM Supercenter Sucat
Nov. 29	SM Megamall
Nov. 30 - Dec. 1	SM City Manila
Dec. 2 - 3	SM Centerpoint
Dec. 4 - 5	SM City Fairview
Dec. 6 - 7	SM City North Edsa
Dec. 9 - 10	SM City Pampanga
Dec. 13 - 14	SM City Cebu
Dec. 17 - 18	SM City Iloilo
Dec. 21 - 22	SM City Davao
Dec. 24	SM Megamall

TOY STORY 2

Visit the Disney Channel Toy Chest at Toy Kingdom and find out how to win and shop for P50,000 worth of toys! Or you can join the Disney Channel play time at the SM Mall Stage Area to win more prizes!

Don't miss the premiere of Toy Story 2 on Disney Channel on Dec. 25 (8 pm)

Disney Channel
www.disneychannel-asia.com

© Disney/Pixar

Walt Disney

Make you dreams come true! Join The Search for The Singing Princess and win a recording contract! And in line with DVD premiere of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, witness different gradeschool glee clubs as they emulate scenes from this all new digitally remastered and THX certified Disney Classic.

See posters for details

© Disney

SM SUPERMALLS

MEGAMALL ▲ CITY NORTH EDSA ▲ SOUTHMALL ▲ CENTERPOINT ▲ SM CITY PAMPANGA ▲ CITY BACOOR
▲ SUPERCENTER SUCAT ▲ CITY FAIRVIEW ▲ CITY MANILA ▲ CITY CEBU ▲ CITY ILOILO ▲ CITY DAVAO

AIG Credit Cards Instant Treats

October 29, 2001 to January 2, 2002

Exchange your charge slips for FREE gifts.

For a FREE AIG Credit Card, call 636-8700

AIG Credit Cards

We've got your family covered.

AIG CREDIT CARDS – VALUE ON ALL YOUR YEAR-ROUND ESSENTIAL NEEDS

The First Credit Card to Offer Innovative Products Exclusively for its Cardholders

For over 3 years and more than 300,000 Cardholders, AIG Credit Cards has proudly pioneered numerous products and services to its cardholders in the Philippines. Now, being known as one of the most innovative financial institution in the country, AIG Credit Cards not only provide irresistible benefits on shopping, but more importantly, they serve their Cardholders where it matters the most – AIG Credit Cards is the first to offer benefits that cater to the basic needs and other daily matters that people think about.

Stay Healthy for FREE with AIG Credit Cards

Staying healthy nowadays can be very expensive, and as part of AIG Credit Cards' way of showing their cardholders that they care, they are providing another first and unique privilege – FREE and TRANSFERABLE Medical and Dental benefits!

Medical Benefits

Protect your own and your entire family's health through FREE medical benefits ONLY from AIG Credit Cards. Avail of FREE Annual Physical Check-up and three (3) transferable general medical consultations at PhilamCare clinics. And, should you encounter any health emergency, you don't need to worry too much about destroying your budget. You can receive up to P5,000.00 one-time reimbursement when you or an immediate family member get hospitalized.

Dental Benefits

Only AIG Credit Cards provides you with FREE dental treatments worth up to P5,000.00. You can also transfer some or all of these dental privileges provided by over 50 PhilamCare Affiliated Dental Clinics within and outside Metro Manila to your immediate family members: Annual Oral Cleaning and Polishing, Annual Dental Check-up, Three (3) Simple Tooth Extractions, Unlimited Temporary fillings, Unlimited Gum Treatment (except Alveolectomy and Gingivectomy), Unlimited Treatment of Pain, Lesions, Wounds and Burns, Unlimited Consultations and 25% OFF ON ALL OTHER PROCEDURES AND TREATMENTS.

AIG Credit Cards Value Grocer

There is nothing more basic than going to the supermarket to purchase our daily essentials, and care for our home and personal needs. AIG Credit Cards is proud to be the first credit card to offer rebates on supermarket purchases, reflected automatically to your credit card bill – No need to submit receipts or fill out application forms. What's more, the cash rebates you earn is in addition to the AI Club rewards points.

AIG Credit Cards believes that cardholders must be rewarded for everything they charge, even if it is as basic as grocery items. Be one of the first to experience value in charging your basic needs to your credit card and enjoy savings that even cash purchases can't give you!

Pay Your Utility Bills and Earn Cash Rebates in One Step

AIG Credit Cards recently launched QUICK BILLS – one of their most innovative and convenient features to date. With Quick Bills, you can pay for your Meralco and PLDT bills in one easy step! Your bills are automatically charged to your credit card, and all you need is to make one payment for all of them every month. Imagine the convenience of consolidating all your bills into a one step payment. And, there is no need to worry about erroneous billing by the utility companies, as AIG Credit Cards will coordinate closely with them to give you the most accurate and efficient billing service. You will still get a copy of your monthly bill, and reversals will be implemented when necessary, upon your and your utility companies' request. Plus, get a cash rebate on your utility bills posted from October 1 to December 31, 2001!

Get Crazy with AIG Credit Cards' Installment Craze

Your dream appliances, that new cellular phone, the latest computer or exquisitely crafted jewelry and watches are all up for grabs for installments with as low as 0% interest! More and more stores have participated in what has become AIG Credit Cards' most extensive Installment Craze ever! Purchase selected Aiwa, Canon, Pioneer, Sharp, Whirlpool and many more items at 0% installment rate or you can enjoy interest rates as low as 1.6% per month for all other brands and models. From November 14 to December 23, 2001, visit the participating stores and get generous gifts for yourselves and your families this Christmas!

AIG Credit Cards Gives Back Your Cash This Christmas

Christmas is the season of the year when even the best budgeter gets the biggest challenge. The spirit of the season is so irresistible that we just can't help but spend for the wonderful things we see for our loved ones and even ourselves. It is so easy to rack up your expenses this Season that we of course have to deal with after the Holidays, when our cash is depleted, or when our credit card bills are bloated. We almost dread the onset of January 2002.

AIG Credit Cardholders need not worry about the above scenario. Finally, they can enjoy the Holidays and sleep well, knowing that they have managed their finances very well – they have purchased everything that they need while earning savings for themselves, and still have cash in their pockets for everything else they need even after the Holidays.

Charge your Cash Expenses

There is almost nothing on this earth that cannot be charged back to AIG Credit Cards. Even when you've already let go of your cash to purchase that amazing find, from an obscure bazaar merchant that does not accept credit, or from a market stall to concoct a legendary noche buena feast, you can still charge it back to your AIG Credit Card for as low as 1.6% installment rate monthly. You get your cash back and pay for your purchase in easy installment terms of your choice. No need to let go of your cash. Instead, get your money back and keep it for more important expenses you may encounter in the future. AIG Credit Cards puts you in control of your finances.

Swap Your Card Balances

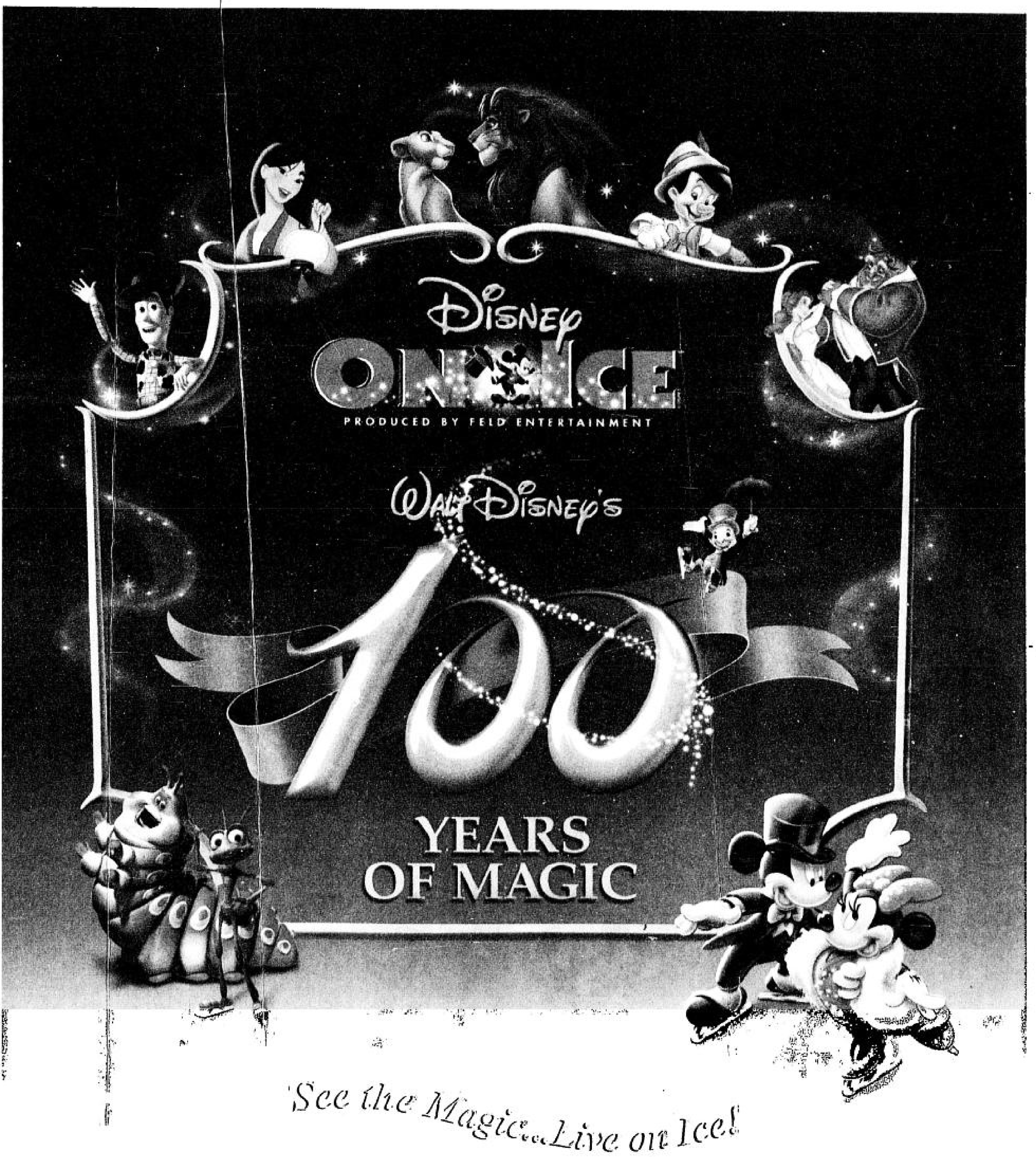
Bogged down by revolving balances on your existing credit cards? So many of us are trapped by this problem that we have very limited spending money left from our salaries after our credit card bills are settled.

Here's some good news: you no longer have to be slowed down by high revolving balance interest rates of your credit cards.

AIG Credit Card is inviting you to SWAP your card balances and pay ONLY as low as 1.6% interest per month (that's 50% of your current interest rate)! And, you get a fixed monthly payment scheme for 3, 6, 12 or 24 months that's easy to budget for. Get rid of your revolving balances with your other credit cards!

Lactum* HELPS MAKE YOUR CHILD A 100% NOURISHED KID

Celebrates



See the Magic...Live on Ice!

Characters from Toy Story and A Bug's Life © Disney/ Pixar

PERFORMS ON DEC. 22, 2001 TO JAN. 6, 2002

ARANETA COLISEUM
www.aranetacoliseum.com

AIG Credit Cards

Ticket Prices: P950, 750, 550, 300, and 80.
For Group Sales and to find out about our Family Package, call 911-3101 loc. 8244.

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SM TICKETNET COMPUTERIZED TICKETING NETWORK
CUBAO · MANILA · HARRISON · NORTH EDSA · STA. MESA
ORTIGAS · LAS PIÑAS · BACOOR · FAIRVIEW · QUIAPO
SUCAT · CEBU · PAMPANGA · ARANETA COLISEUM
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VICTORY LINER INC

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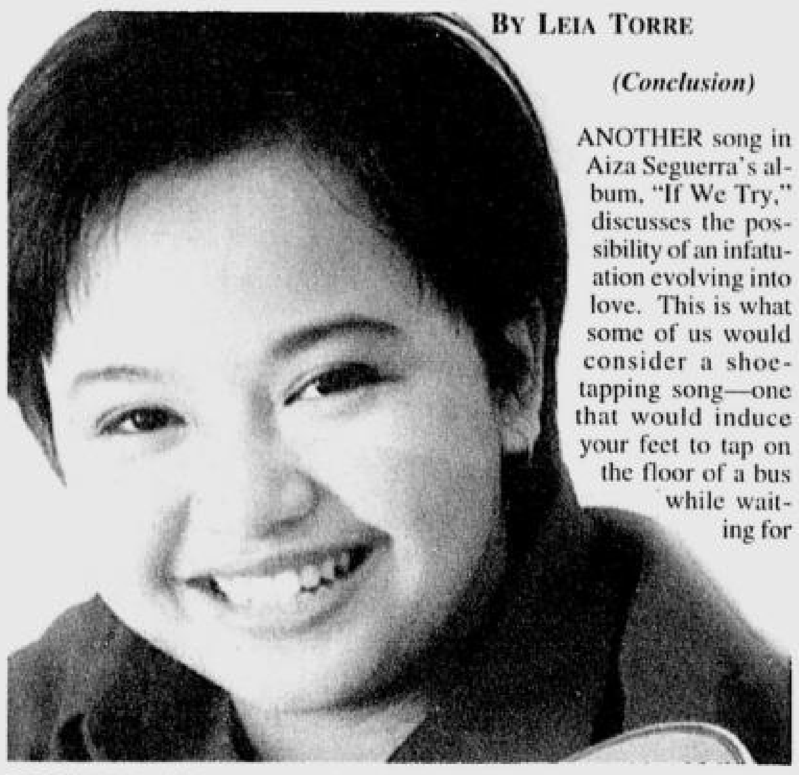
SM SUPERMALLS

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

‘Pagdating ng Panahon’ articulates listeners’ aspirations



SEGUERRA. Unique appeal and talent.

By Leia Torre

(Conclusion)

ANOTHER song in Aiza Seguerra’s album, “If We Try,” discusses the possibility of an infatuation evolving into love. This is what some of us would consider a shoe-tapping song—one that would induce your feet to tap on the floor of a bus while waiting for a traffic jam to resolve itself. It has a fresh sound, and is definitely not one of those songs you should listen to if you’re trying to lull yourself to sleep.

Medley

The only medley in the album, “In My Life Medley,” is an enchanting combination of two songs that contain the phrase “in my life.” It starts off with one song, continues with the other, and ends with the two songs being sung simultaneously in counterpoint. This is one of those medleys that you have to hear for yourself in order to be able to appreciate it. The two songs that are melded are both well-known, but combining them reveals another facet, one that could be most enjoyable if we allowed it to be.

Another thing that sets this album apart from some others is its inclusion of a song that glorifies God. “I See You Lord” is a song that has simple lyrics and melody and minimal accompaniment, but is powerful nevertheless because of Aiza’s heartfelt interpretation . It reminds us all that we should always look for the Lord in everything that surrounds us.

Upbeat song

“Put a Little Love in Your Heart” is another upbeat song. It emphasizes a timeless message: a little love in everyone’s heart can help make the world a better place for everyone. The number has a very catchy melody and rhythm, and its repetitive lyrics stress the message of the song, as well as make it easy to recall.

Another established song in the album is “Take Me, I’ll Follow.” This is one of those songs that almost everybody knows, and thus takes for granted. By doing her own version, Aiza reawakens everybody’s awareness of the song and the idea it conveys: the importance of friendship.

“If” is best described as a wistful song. It describes love at its most powerful, and the lyrics are kept unadorned so that they do not distract the listener from the basic truth the song is conveying. The number cites circumstances that could accompany true love, such as never wanting to be apart, wanting to spend eternity together, etc.

Friendship

“The Right One” tells us that love does not necessarily stem from sweet songs, dreams, laughter, or romantic episodes. It can flourish in a good friendship that can last a lifetime. The song imparts the importance of looking for the right one for us among our friends. Who knows, he or she might have been under your nose all along.

“Sorry” is self-explanatory. What the singer is apologizing for, however, is another matter. In this case, it’s for not letting the person involved know that his or her feelings were reciprocated, leading to heartache on both sides. The apology includes the plea for an opportunity to start again.

The song has some predictable phrases, and it becomes repetitive after a while. But if one concentrates on the voice of the singer, which is very refreshing, the song is rescued from being redundant, as each repetition is executed in a different manner.

Combination

Having such a combination of songs in the album keeps it from being commonplace. It offers a selection of numbers that most people can relate to. The songs also suit Aiza’s voice very well, some more than others.

Modifying the tempo and accompaniment of some of the songs likewise ensured that listeners would not be bored listening to new renditions of the same old songs that still sound exactly like the originals, making the new version superfluous. Fortunately, those responsible for this album were not afraid of change, and thus did not make that mistake. But above all, this album shows the public the unique appeal and talent of Aiza Seguerra, as long as we can open ourselves up to her musical experience.

A Canon Christmas to everyone!

for Trixie
JOY
for Lola
PEACE
for Mommy
for Kuya
Merry Christmas
for Tita Tess
for Ate
for LoLo
Greetings
Season's Greetings
for Daddy

BF800
For our baby who's now a lady
- Canon Quality Glass Lens
- Big View finder
- Powerful 3-way flash
- Red eye reduction
- Self-timer
- Built-in lens cover
- P1,995 ONLY

AF9
Great for blow-ups
- 35mm lens
- Active AF system
- Big View finder
- Powerful flash
- Easy-to-see LCD
- P3,850 ONLY

Mini II
Ladies' Choice
- Active 3-point AIAF system
- Convenient flash mode dial
- Ultra slim and lightweight
- P6,325 ONLY

AS 1
Official Beach Camera
- 32mm lens
- Active 3-point AIAF system
- Wind-proof, sand proof
- Real-image Big Viewfinder
- Splash-resist
- P11,350 ONLY

Zoom65
Magnify Your World
- 38-65mm zoom lens
- 3-point AIAF Focus
- 3-way Flash Function
- Self-Timer
- P5,995 ONLY

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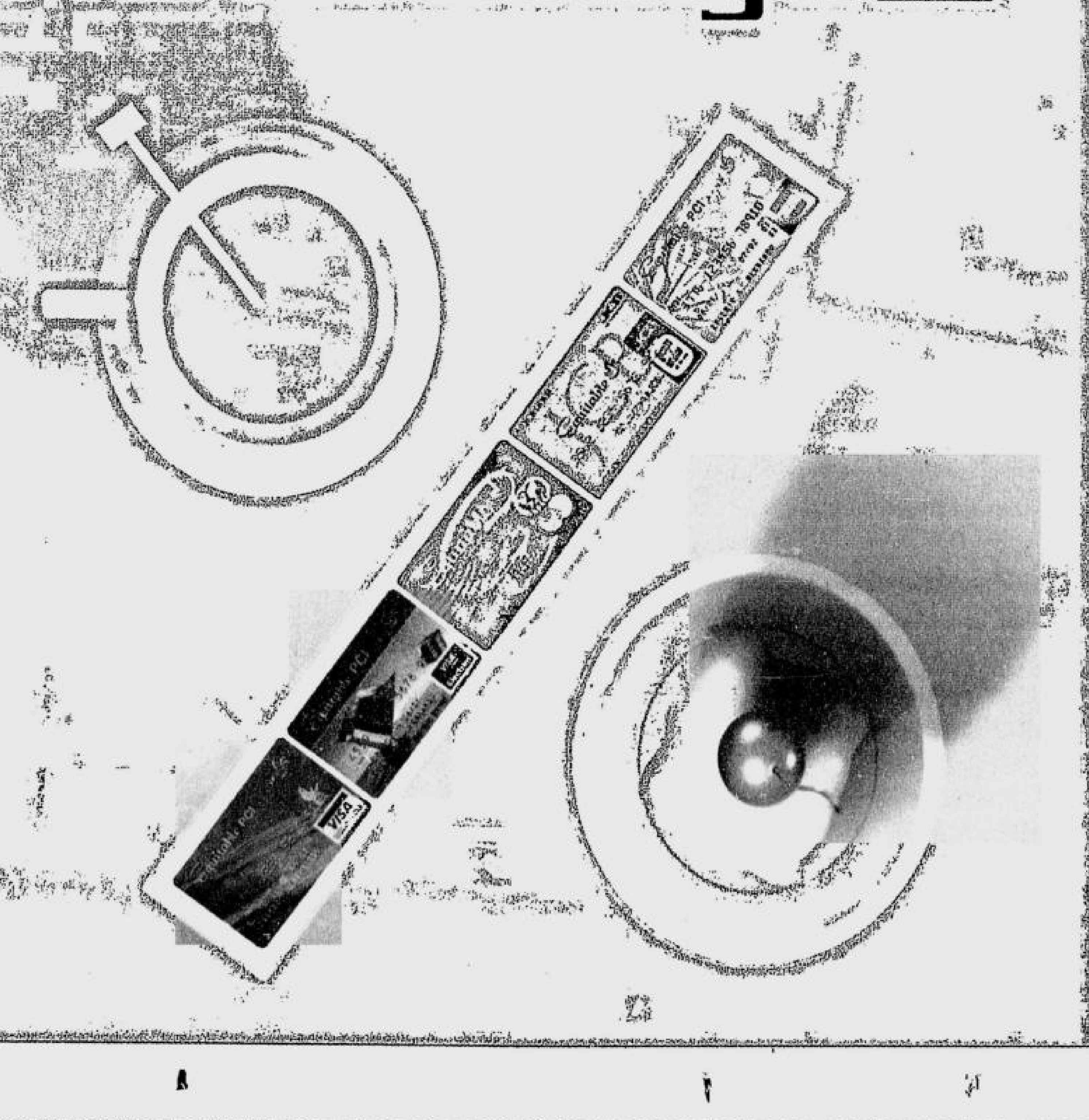

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1500 Series of 2001

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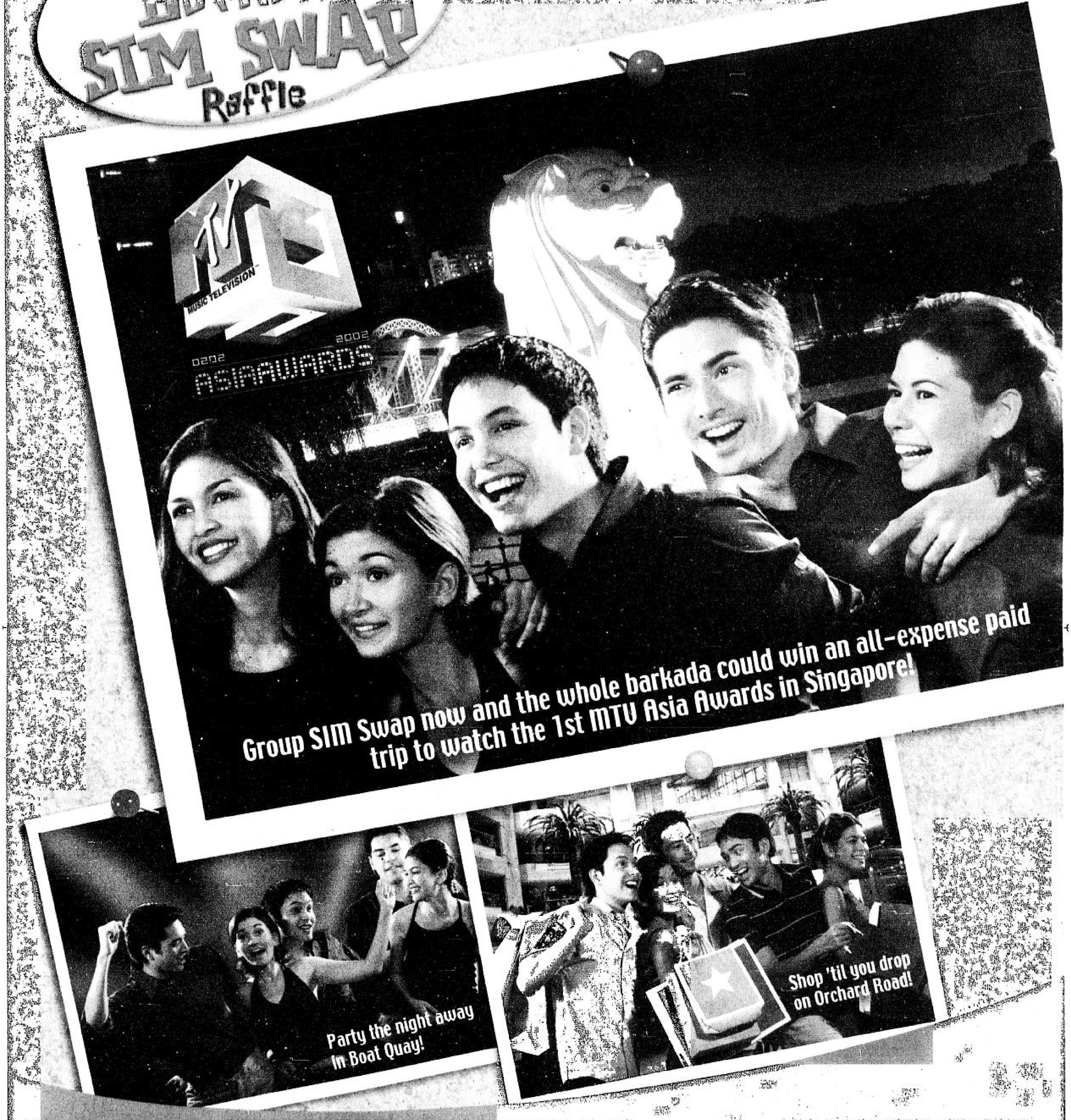

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PROMO MECHANICS

1. Promo duration is from November 20, 2001 - January 10, 2002. Promo begins on November 22, 2001 in the provinces.
2. There are two ways of forming a barkada and joining the promo:
   a) Four or five active non-SMART prepaid subscribers except Talk N' Text subscribers can swap their SIM Cards for SMART Buddy SIM packs.
   b) Four or five active non-SMART post-paid subscribers can swap their SIM Cards for SMART Gold subscriptions.
      - Those who will group SIM swap to SMART Gold must submit the following documents: completely filled-out Service Application Form (SAF) and waiver form, valid ID, proof of billing address and financial documents for Plans 3000 and 4000.
      - Watch out for the new SMART Gold Subscription Plans.
   - SIM swappers must present an operative Dual Band celfone with an active non-SMART SIM card (except Talk N' Text SIM card).
3. All barkada SIM swappers will be given a group raffle coupon.
4. All barkada/group SIM swappers should fill out a group raffle coupon with their names, addresses, SMART Buddy/Gold celfone numbers and signatures.
   Group SIM swappers can submit their coupons at authorized TSI branches, SMART Wireless Centers, or to any SMART/TSI representative in SMART/TSI sponsored events, mall events and school blitzes.
   - Only TSI agents who are authorized by TSI/SMART to man in SMART/TSI sponsored events, mall events or school blitzes are allowed to conduct the SIM swap.
5. A total of four (4) barkadas will win a trip to Singapore for five to watch the MTV Asia Awards plus pocket money of P25,000.00 for each barkada member in the raffle draw on January 15, 2002.
6. SMART will only shoulder the expenses of the trip for a maximum of 5 persons per winning group. The prize is convertible to cash (P200,000.00).
7. Winners will be notified through a voice call, text message, and registered mail.
8. Prizes may be claimed at Ace Saatchi and Saatchi, 10th floor, Feliza Bldg., 108 Herrera St., Legaspi Village Makati City.
9. Winners must present the winning raffle stub, notification letter, valid ID, and their SMART SIM cards. Winners of the trip to Singapore must also present birth certificates and passports.
10. All employees of SMART Communications, Inc., Pilipino Telephone Corporation and their respective ad agencies as well as relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity are disqualified from the promo.

* SMART will only shoulder the cost for a maximum of five barkada members. Winning barkada with member/s under 18 years old must be accompanied by a guardian. If there are already 5 members in the winning barkada, SMART will not shoulder the cost for the guardian. Winning group with 4 members 18 years old & above may bring along one more companion who is of legal age also.

* Individual SIM swappers from November 20, 2001 - January 10, 2002 may also win P20,000.00 on the January 15, 2002 raffle draw.

* Customer Care Officers, TSI agents and TSI counter representatives may also win P30,000.00 cash prize if they facilitated the group SIM swap of the winning group SIM swappers.

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Saturday **SPECIAL**

Strong Oscar buzz for 'In the Bedroom'

BY CHRISTY LEMIRE

SPACEK. Achingly honest portrayal.

NEW YORK—There's been a ton of Oscar buzz for "In the Bedroom" and for its stars, Sissy Spacek and Tom Wilkinson, whose performances earned them a Special Jury Prize at this year's Sundance Film Festival.

Every bit of praise they've received is deserved.

Stunning debut

The film is a stunning feature debut from director Todd Field, best known until now as the pianist who introduces Tom Cruise's character to a secret world of dark orgies in "Eyes Wide Shut."

Spacek—a five-time Oscar nominee who won for 1980's "Coal Miner's Daughter"—and Wilkinson provide an achingly honest portrayal of parents whose marriage nearly collapses under the strain of their son's murder.

Based on a short story by Andre Dubus, "In the Bedroom" accurately depicts how people grieve in different ways. It's also a fascinating exploration of the steps ordinary people take under extraordinary circumstances.

Frank Fowler (Nick Stahl), an architecture student home for the summer and working as a lobsterman in the small, coastal town of Camden, Maine, is having a fling with Natalie (Marisa Tomei), an older, divorced mother of two.

His mother, Ruth, (Spacek) is the local choral music teacher; his father, Matt (Wilkinson), the town doctor. Their days are long and idyllic, filled with cookouts and Little League games.

Jealous ex-husband

But Natalie's ex-husband, Richard (William Mapother), part of the prominent family that owns the town cannery, feels jealous and threatened by his ex-wife's new lover. After several increasingly contentious confrontations, Richard shows up at Natalie's house one day and shoots Frank to death.

Shocking as the moment is, it's not really what "In the Bedroom" is about. The film follows the ways in which the Fowlers' seemingly strong bond dissolves after an integral part of their lives is ripped from them.

Ruth wants to yell; Matt tries to connect with her through small talk and tiny compliments. But they end up withdrawing further and further from each other—she with mind-numbing late-night TV and chain-smoking, he with yard work and sleeping pills.

Brutally honest

When they do finally speak, in an argument that is so brutally honest, it's agonizing to watch, they unleash decades of blame and resentment that perhaps they never knew they had. The scene has a raw intensity.

From the very beginning, though, Field's pacing provides subtle tension, even during seemingly happy moments—the rustling of wind through the trees, breaking the silence on a lazy afternoon; Natalie's tiny shrieks that simultaneously sound frisky and frightened as her young lover chases her through a meadow.

Field, who co-wrote the script, has created a thorough sense of place that New Englanders will appreciate; he spent time growing up in Maine, and it shows, from the reserved way the Fowlers' friends and neighbors react to Frank's murder to the tiniest details. Red Sox broadcasts crackle on the speakers from the AM sports radio station; a can of Moxie, a brand of soda that's popular in New England, is visible on a refrigerator shelf when Ruth goes for a midnight snack.

Believable accents

And all the accents are believable and not overdone—especially Wilkinson's. (The British actor, who co-starred in "The Full Monty," immersed himself in the Maine lobstering culture to prepare for the role.)

Despite the stars' strong performances, the supporting players must not be ignored. During his brief time on screen, Stahl is bright-eyed, charming and magnetic. Tomei, in the best work of her inconsistent career, is palpably shattered.

"In the Bedroom" is gorgeous. It is haunting. It may just be the best movie of the year.

A Miramax Films release, "In the Bedroom" runs 122 minutes. *AP*

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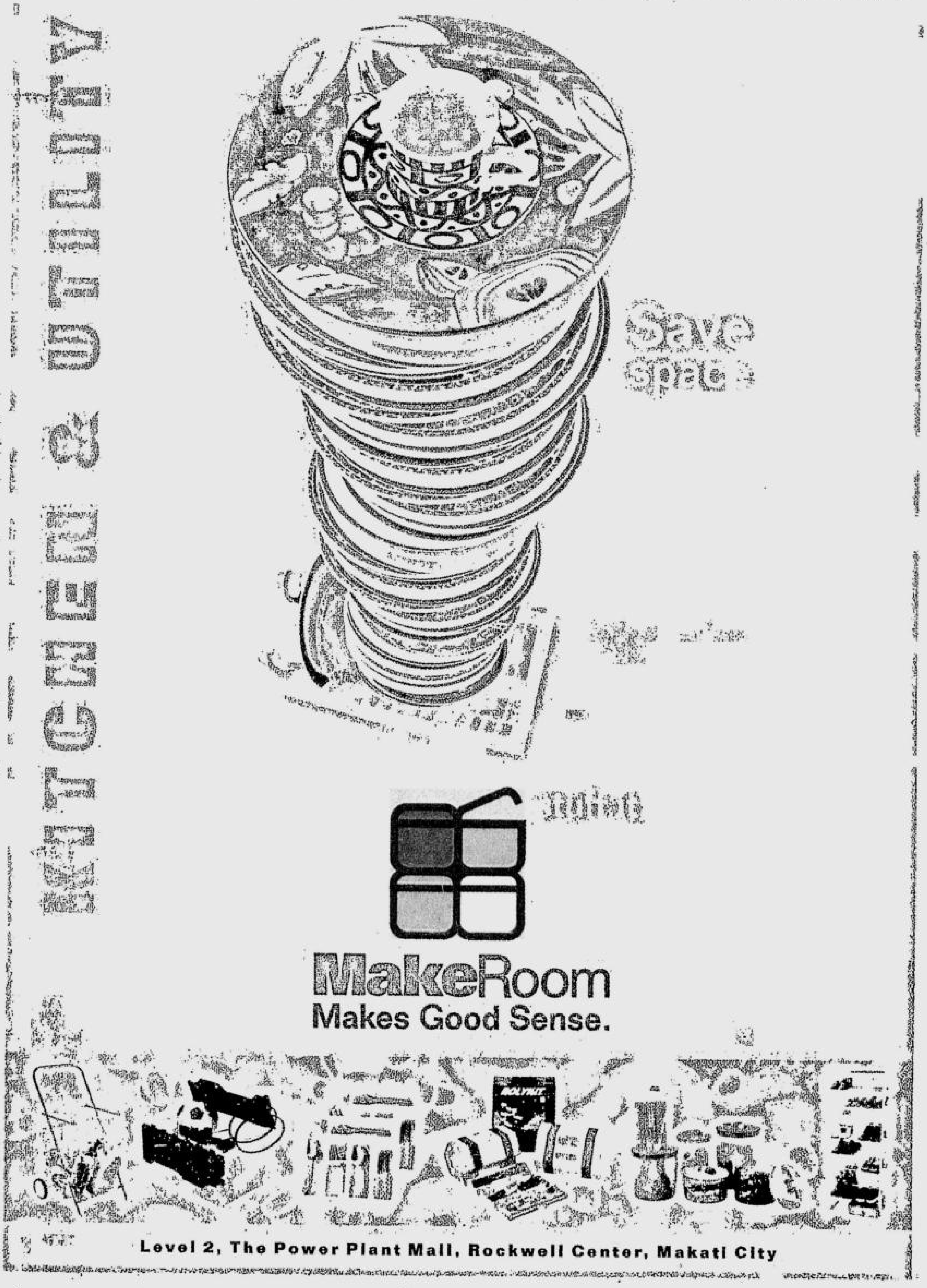

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'MONSTERS, INC.'

Five long years in the making

By Nestor U. Torre

QUICKIE filmmakers who are used to churning out movies in a month or less apiece will never understand the people who come up with animated features like Disney and Pixar's latest hit, "Monsters, Inc.," which took five long *years* to produce.

Work ethic

Its executive producer, John Lasseter, sums up his team's work ethic perfectly: "With animation, it's never about instant gratification!" He should know: he's been there before with past animated hits like "Toy Story," "Toy Story 2" and "A Bug's Life."

Director Pete Docter adds: "It's now called computer animation, but it's not as if the computers do all of the work. *We* do—hundreds of us, making literally millions of individual artistic and technical choices and decisions over a really long period of time!"

> 'With animation, it's never about instant gratification,' says executive producer John Lasseter

How did this new "monster" hit from Disney and Pixar first come to be, five long years ago? It began, as all good things do, with the tantalizing glimmer of an idea that refuses to just lie there and behave.

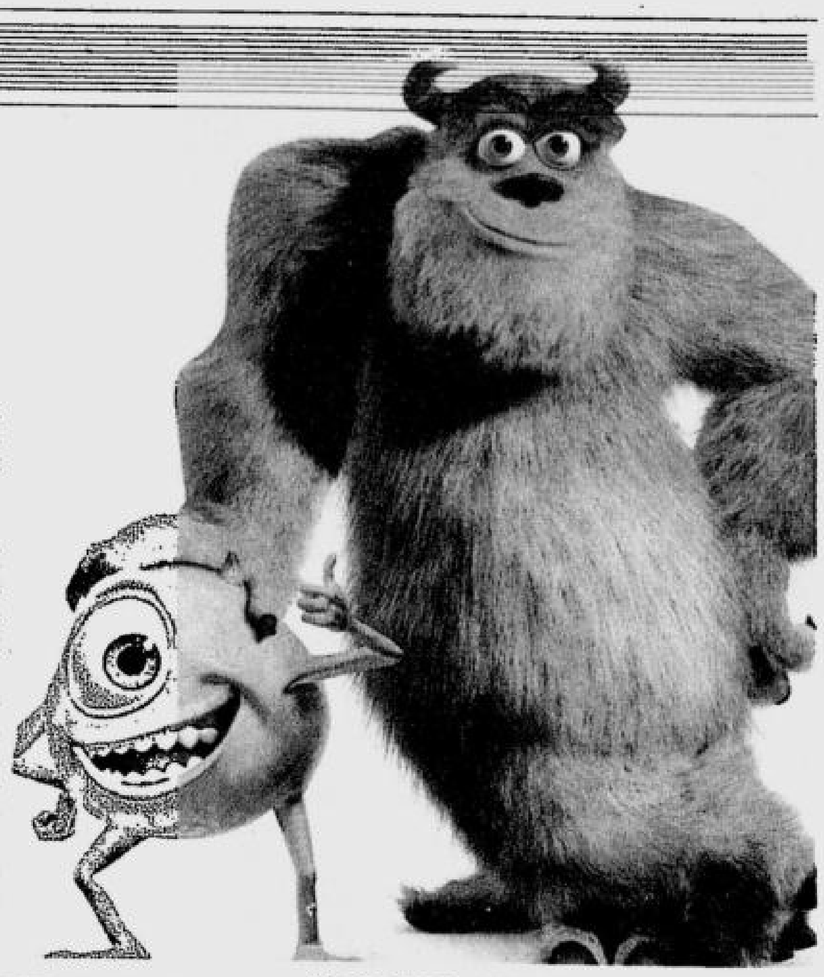
Docter recalls: "It was while we were working on 'Toy Story' that I first had the idea that would lead to 'Monsters, Inc.' I began to think about the other things that were true for me as a kid.

Under the stairs

"One thing struck me: when I was a child, I *knew* that monsters existed. I didn't only imagine them like my parents said, they were *really* there in the closet, or under the stairs, especially at night.

"When I brought this up with my team, we began thinking that there must be some *reason* why monsters scare kids, and began playing around with that notion. Eventually, we came up with the idea that monsters scare children because it's their job!"

That clever assumption turned out to have a lot of comic possibilities, which Docter's team continued to explore and develop.



"MONSTERS, INC." One bright idea on top of another.

Screams

Their next sweet invention was coming up with the witty conceit that monsters terrified children so that they could capture their screams and turn it into a strange kind of "electricity" to power the engines and turbines of "Monstropolis," where all monsters lived.

The third bright brainstorm they got was to get a little girl lost in the monsters' city—and instead of her getting scared of them, it was the monsters who were terrified of *her*!

One bright idea on top of another—that's how Lasseter and Docter's scriptwriters built up the new project's story. And then it was the turn of the animators to translate the plot and characters the writers had wittily created into the dazzling, funny and heartwarming entertainment that "Monsters, Inc." is today.

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Pirated 'Harry Potter' CDs magically appear in HK

By Chee-may Chow

HONG KONG—Pirated versions of the smash hit Harry Potter movie magically appeared in back street stalls around Hong Kong on Sunday, weeks before the film about the English boy wizard is due to open in the territory.

"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" will not hit the silver screen in Hong Kong until Dec. 12.

But street peddlers in the teeming Wanchai district were already offering counterfeit copies of the smash hit for around HK$20 ($2.56) each, a fraction of what moviegoers will pay.

Spellbound

The blockbuster produced by Warner Bros. Pictures, a unit of AOL Time Warner Inc, has left fans in both the United States and Britain spellbound after its release on Nov. 16.

It grossed $100 million in the US box office in just five days, tying a record set in 1999 by "Star Wars: Episode I—Phantom Menace."

Despite a crackdown on copyright piracy by authorities in Hong Kong in recent years, the problem has persisted.

Illegal vendors have managed to find ways to carry on business as usual, often offering sneak previews of Hollywood blockbusters before their public release.

Because of the government's new vigilance, VCD stalls in some shopping arcades are left unmanned, with a shoe box at the door containing small change saying "take your own change."

Customers dutifully pay after helping themselves to discs of their choice.

Customs officials insist, however, that the problem has vastly improved from days when the territory was on a piracy watchlist issued by the US government.

Hong Kong was taken off the list in 1999, when US officials said they were satisfied that Hong Kong had toughened measures to stop the problem.

Penalty

Selling counterfeit goods can lead to a maximum penalty of four years in jail and a HK$50,000 fine per fake item sold.

Some 880,000 pirated VCDs were confiscated by customs during the first six months of the year and a total of 1.53 million discs were seized in 2000.

Most raids focus on illegal manufacturing plants where copies of smash hit titles can be churned out en masse at extremely low production costs.

Reuters

ILLEGAL VCD copies of "Harry Potter" are selling for HK$20.

Dingdong Avanzado resumes concert series at Onstage

MONTAGE

DINGDONG Avanzado brings his "Up Close" concert series to Greenbelt Onstage on Dec. 5. Then on Dec. 19, he moves to the newly-opened ArKdia in Malate. The show features music that the artist is known for—light, easy listening and romantic.

Dingdong is busy promoting his Christmas single "Ngayong Pasko," which is part of Star Records' holiday album. His full length album will be released in January 2002.

Piano bar

A piano bar specializing in soothing music has opened in Palanan, Makati. Located at the corner of Filmore and Arellano sts., 5060 Cafe and Bar does not have resident sing-along masters or hosts. It only has a pianist who can accompany you to the sound of your favorite ballad, pop song or standard.

Tonight, join Jimmy Mirandilla and Arnes as they jam with everybody at the Piano Lounge with pianist Ernest Largo-Lumagbas.

New store

TFB Inc. will open its newest Giordano store at the ground floor of Glorietta 4 in Makati today at 5 p.m. The shop is a Concept Store and a fashion show will follow the inauguration.

The company acquired the exclusive distribution rights to retail Giordano products in the Philippines in November 1989 and now operates 37 company-owned shops throughout the country.

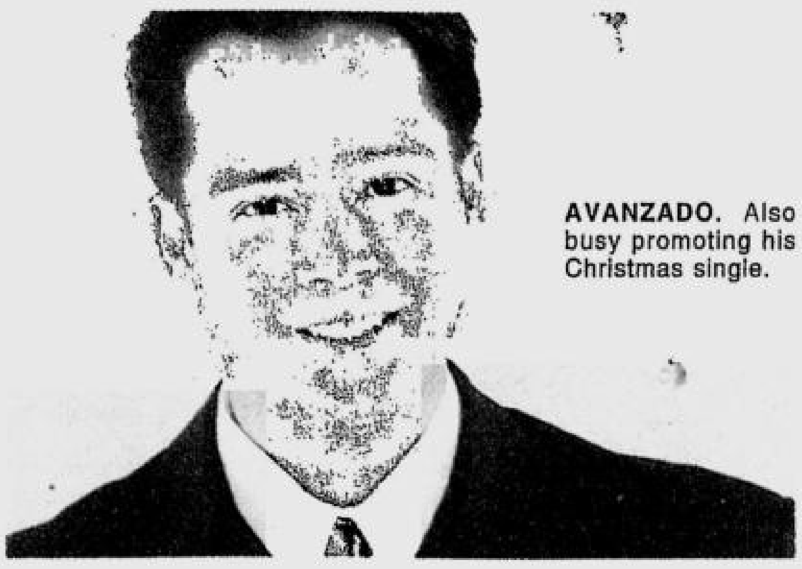
Giordano offers a wide array of merchandise built upon tees, shirts, polos, jeans and khakis that are worn everyday.

Bukas Palad concert

"A Christmas Praise" concert with the Bukas Palad Music Ministry and the Philippine Pops Orchestra under the baton of Gerard Salonga will be staged today at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. at the Meralco Theatre.

Special guests include Karylle, Noel Cabangon, Tony Lambino, Jeff Arcilla, Ateneo Boys Choir, The Company, Jopse Mari Chan and Liza Chan.

Bukas Palad, the singing group founded by Ateneans Fr. Manoling Francisco, S.J. Norman Agatep and Jandi Arboleda, has popularized original Filipino hymns sung at mass all over the country.


AVANZADO. Also busy promoting his Christmas single.

The fundraising concert is for the benefit of the Ateneo Scholarship Fund and the Jesuit Volunteers Philippines (JVP). Call 426-5971.

Regine's nationwide tour

Regine Velasquez goes on a nationwide tour of SM Malls to promote her latest album, "Reigne." The grand launch of the album will take place at 5 p.m. tomorrow at the SM Megamall Megastrip. This will coincide with "Reigne's" TV launch which will take place earlier that day on GMA-7's "SOP"

Succeeding performances will be on Dec. 9 at SM Bacoor, Dec. 13 at SM North Edsa, Dec. 19 at SM Pampanga, Dec. 20 at SM Southmall, Jan. 10 at SM Iloilo, Jan 11 at SM Cebu and Jan. 12 at SM Davao. (***Compiled by Edmund L. Sicam***)

The beauty of volunteer work

INNER beauty is as much a celebrated quality as a pretty face and svelte, statuesque figure when the Millennium Miss Philippines Red Cross 2001 marks its coronation night this Dec. 5 at the Manila Hotel, to be aired on RPN 9.

"This is one way of giving Filipina volunteers special recognition," explains Tessie Usapdin, Communications Manager of the Philippine National Red Cross. "We want to show Red Cross branches around the world that we have volunteers who are not only committed but beautiful as well."

Four pageants

Although only four major Miss Philippines-Red Cross pageants have been mounted since the Philippine National Red Cross was officially recognized as an independent international chapter in April 1947 (local pageants are held regularly by most of the 88 chapters), the fund-raising event has consistently chosen women blessed with the kind of beauty and character that continues to bloom through the years.

Commercial model and news anchor Liza Beroya was crowned Miss Philippines-Red Cross in the early 1990s, and Grace Villacorta earned the coveted title before she pursued her career in fashion modeling. One can only wonder what the future holds for the winner among the 48 volunteer-contestants of this pageant's special millennium edition, but Usapdin is certain that the girl's immediate schedule will be very busy.

Fulfilling

"It's very, very fulfilling," she avers. "As an Ambassador of the Red Cross, the winner will be required to represent the organization and promote its ideals in major functions here and around the country. It's a different experience to be physically involved in the Red Cross' relief operations, blood donations, and rescue and response training!"

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Promo period is from November 23, 2001 to May 23, 2002.

Per DTI-NCR permit No. 1811, Series of 2001

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CITIBANK

Mini-retrospective of Araceli Limcaco Dans' 'calado' paintings in 2002 art calendar

By Nestor U. Torre

ARACELI Limcaco Dans' "Pamana ni Inay" art exhibit will open at Megamall's Mandaluyong Art Gallery on Dec. 6, and interest is high in the latest collection of her prized *calado* watercolor paintings.

Signature paintings

Aside from that main focus (the exhibit runs until Dec. 20), there is an adjunct activity that is also exciting art lovers: the release of Dans' 2002 calendar of her signature *calado* paintings from the '80s onward.

Fourteen of her major paintings are reproduced in luminous color in the calendar, which is one of the very few local art calendars devoted solely to the works of one artist.

Art calendars are popular because they can be enjoyed and appreciated the whole year through, and even after that. In Dans' case, her calendar is like a mini-retrospective of the evolution of her *calado* paintings, which have featured various combinations of the embroidered cloth with flowers, shells, found objects, driftwood, people, dried leaves, and birds.

People interested in Dans' art calendar can visit the Metropolitan Art Gallery during the course of her "Pamana ni Inay" exhibit. Or you can call Bridges Foundation at 372-0752 (ask for Virgie).

THE ARTIST (center) with the special students at Bridges Foundation.

Special needs

Bridges Foundation, a school for children with special needs, is the beneficiary of both Dans' exhibit and her *calado* art calendar. It is run by one of her children, and she fully supports the school's activities.

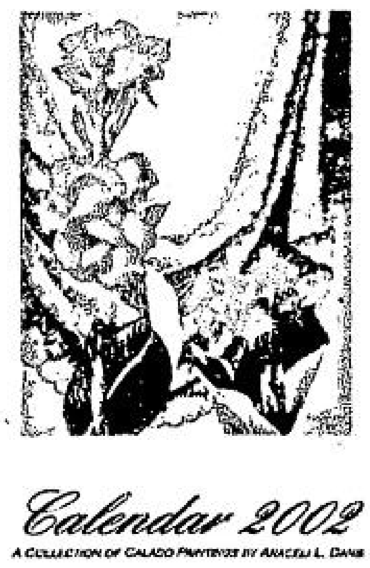
The funds raised through the calendar's sales will upgrade the school's facilities and equipment, support the education of children from economically marginalized families, promote society's awareness of and compassion for the differently-abled, and uphold their rights for acceptance, inclusion and to be educated. That way, they can be recognized as productive members of their homes, if not their communities.

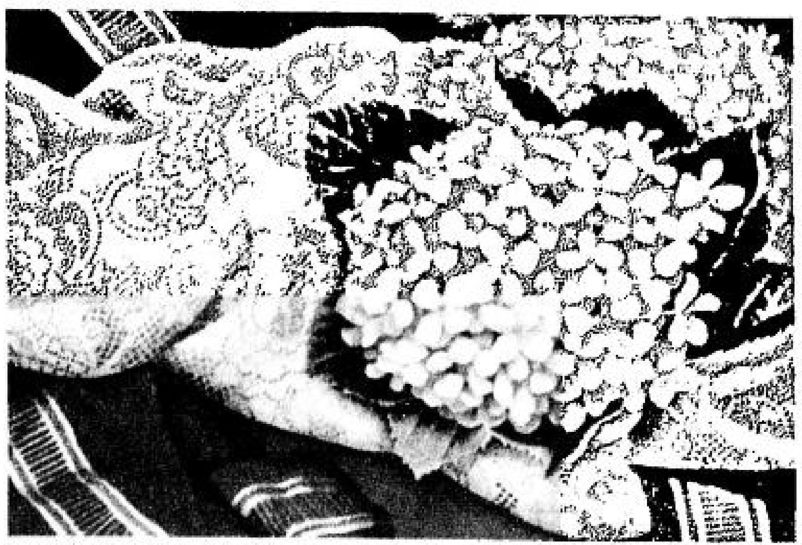
We've seen a preview copy of Dans' art calendar and it is so beautiful and striking that we're sure that many people will want to hang it in their homes and offices.

Unique elegance

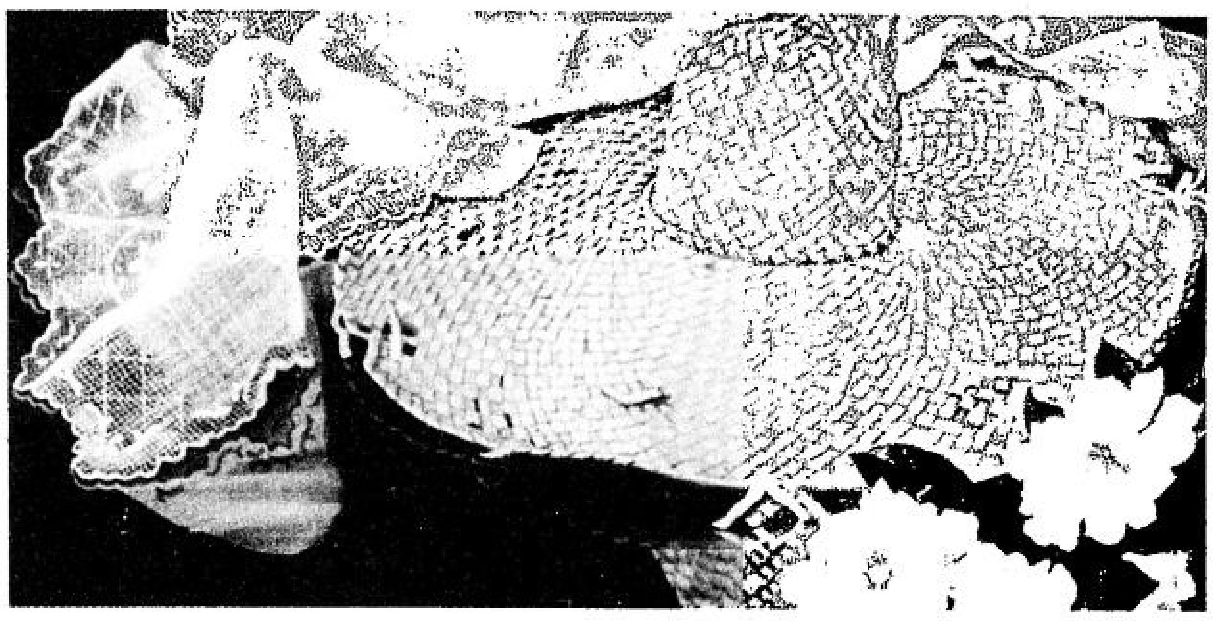
It showcases lovely and distinctive *calado* paintings from 1986 to the present, each suffused with unique elegance and visual lyricism. Our favorite panel is the one for May, a rustic piece titled "Sombrero ni Inay" that combines *calado* fabric, white flowers and an old *buri* hat.

The painting has special significance for Dans because the tattered hat she painted belonged to her own mother. That's Araceli Dans for you: she makes art personal—and the personal, truly beautiful.

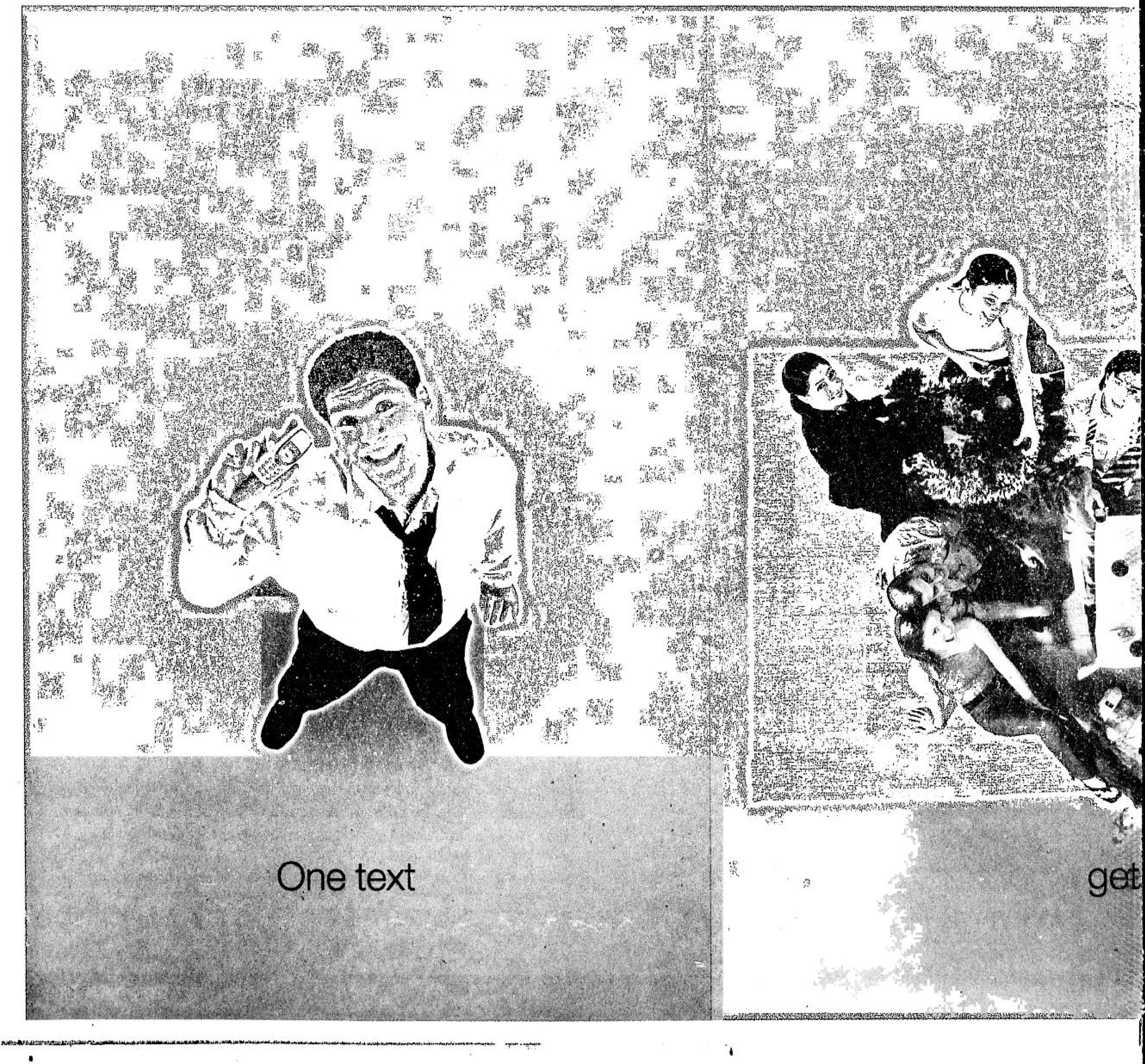

Calendar 2002
A Collection of Calado Paintings by Araceli L. Dans



DANS' painting for January starts the calendar year off on a light, bright note.



"SOMBRERO ni Inay" has a personal significance for the artist because the tattered hat she painted belonged to her own mother.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Boots Anson-Roa pays TV-film industry back

BY RODOLFO A.G. SILVESTRE JR.

WE all know Boots Anson-Roa as the sweet, upright lady of Philippine show business, and as an articulate and astute emcee of awards nights and other show biz events. But there's more to her than initially meets the eye.

Chairperson

Last June, she was elected chairperson of the Cinema Committee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and as such, she also sits as member of the NCCA Cinema Values Reorientation Program (CVRP) Directorate.

Recently, Boots, along with Atty. Espiridion Laxa, president of the Film Academy of the Philippines, represented the NCCA CVRP in the Beijing filmfest held the third week of October in China.

They also met with leaders of the Chinese film industry and observed their state-of-the-art moviemaking facilities.

Enlightenment

Upon her return from China, Boots shared, "The China experience has been a source both of enlightenment and envy. There is definitely much to learn from them."

Of the films that she saw, specifically "Bright Heart," "Dancing Girls," "As Light As Glass," "Ordinary People's Life," and "Last Hunter," she observed, "The scripts were concise, and simple but not sophomoric. Although we understood what was being said on the screen only because of the subtitles, we could absorb what was being said because the movies moved forward without much distraction."

"There were few characters too. And if there was a sub-text, this was closely woven into the main plot. What is remarkable is the actors do not call attention to themselves. They're almost self-effacing.

"The set designs too do not distract from the movie. Surprisingly, one gets the impression that the direction is merely a 'by-product' of the whole production, and not as though the director were screaming, 'This is my masterpiece.'"

Philosophy

Boots noted that Chinese films "reflect their philosophy that tend toward simplicity, simple being good and profound."

"The movies are values-laden," she said, "but they do not pontificate. It's all very subliminal, and yet the message came out without making you feel you just came out of a lecture hall. Their movies deal with everyday life."

"At the offices of the China Film International Company, we viewed their equipment for digital post-production processing of films, and for subtitling. We were amazed at their low price of $2,000 for subtitling per film. No wonder, South Korean producers use Chinese facilities for the purpose," said Boots.

Computerized system

Boots and Atty. Laxa were definitely impressed with the China Film Archive. "They utilize a state-of-the-art computerized system for the inventory of films being preserved for posterity. The archive even has a theater with a 1,000-seat capacity, thus allowing a large audience to view their old films," Boots noted. Also in the archive building are the China Film Research Center and the China Film Art Center.

Of the state of the film industry in China, Boots concluded, "It is a united industry, as their outstanding output would show."

Her observations in China will help Boots a lot in her NCCA activities. She volunteered, "The Cinema Committee prioritizes education and outreach, and assistance to alternative filmmakers."

"Our committee is well-represented, with its members representing the creative people, the production staff, media, the mainstream, and the alternative group. Their respective inputs allow a thorough scrutiny of project proposals."

Other committees

She clarified, "We don't decide unilaterally. We coordinate with other committees if the projects also fall under their concern. For example, if the proposal has to do with a movie about an indigenous group, we involve the committee that has to do with that particular cultural community."

Boots' other involvements these days include a dzMM radio talk show, a Channel 2 early evening soap opera, and teaching broadcast communication at De La Salle University.

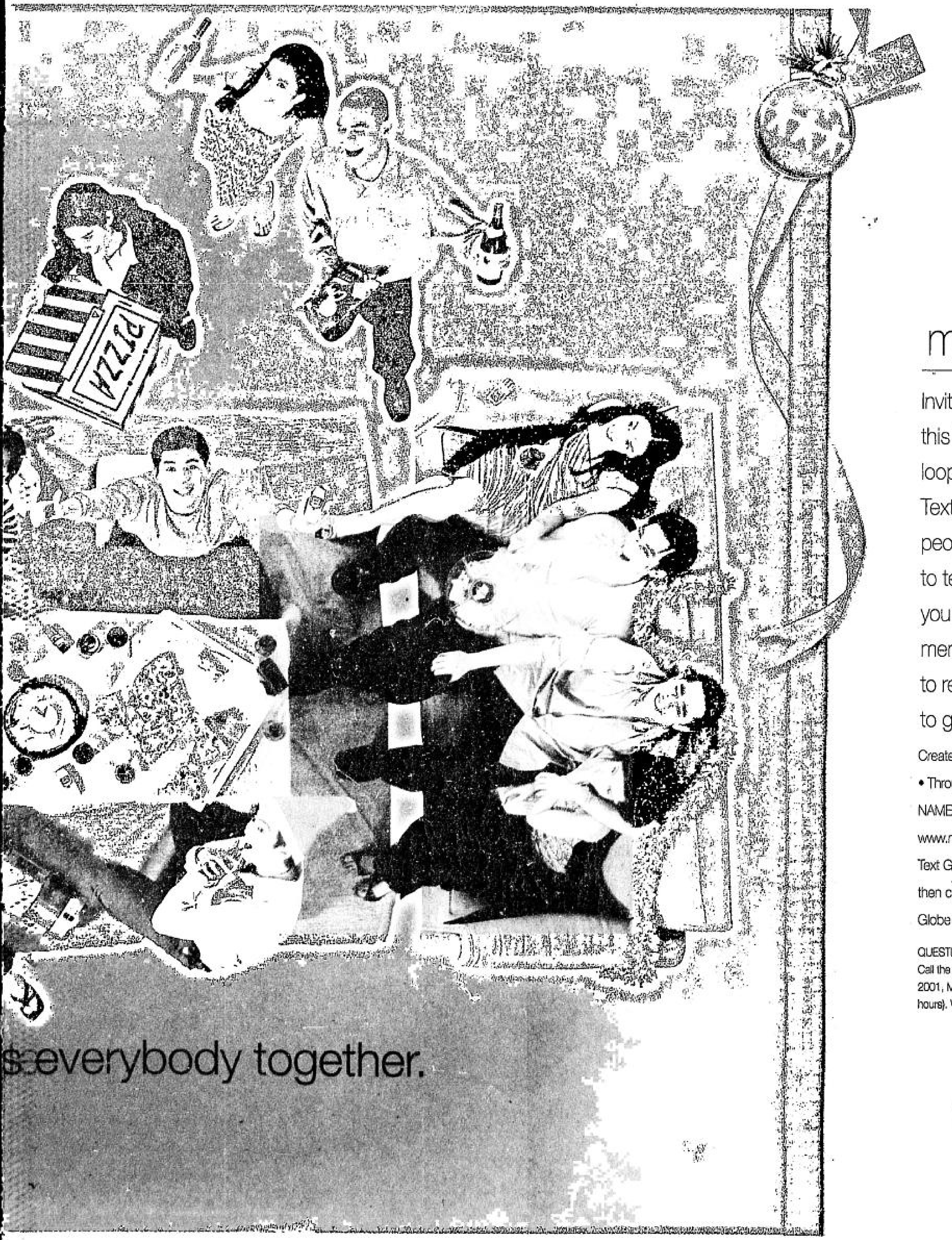
"My NCCA activities and my academic work are my way of paying back the industry that has been very kind to me," she said.

"They've been saying all these years that the industry is dying. But look, for all the economic crises that have come and gone, it remains alive. All in all, I am hopeful because we have such bright talents, whether they are actors, directors or production people. My focus now is on helping them further realize their potential."

OBSERVING the post-production digital process at the Digital Production Company of the China Film Bureau with Atty. Esperidion Laxa (left).

IN the costume section of the China Film Archive.

CLIMBING the Great Wall of China.



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A shopping paradise in eastern suburbia

BY JOEL V. NIGOS

ROBINSONS Metro East, the newest mall chain of Robinsons Land Corp., opened recently to cater to the shopping needs of the people living in the eastern part of Metro Manila.

The five-level shopping mall, located along Marcos Highway, is also the eighth mall development of Robinsons Land, a major player in the Philippine retail industry.

Its ideal site has made Robinsons Metro East the most prestigious and popular shopping destination of residents of nearby subdivisions and villages from neighboring towns and cities of Marikina, Cainta, Pasig, Cogeo, Antipolo, San Mateo, Taytay, Tanay, Binangonan, Montalban, parts of Quezon City, and other towns east of the metropolis. It would also satisfy the shopping needs of a large expat community in the area who will no longer have to go through the hassle of traffic when going to Metro Manila's shopping centers every time they want to shop.

Each level of the mall has an anchor tenant, the strongest of which are Robinsons Department Store (RDS) and Big R Supercenter. It also carries an interesting line-up which includes eight state-of-the-art cinemas in Robinsons Movieworld; Dream Zone, a video arcade and recreational facility for young children; Handyman, a "do-it yourself" hardware store; a full-line drugstore in The Medicine Corner (TMC); plus an extensive array of boutiques, fast-food chains and restaurants and other popular and unique shops. The mall also features an all-imported level where most of foreign-branded boutiques are located. A Bayad Center can also be found inside the mall for a hassle-free way of paying bills.

To welcome shoppers is a dancing fountain, a regular feature of all Robinsons malls. All of the mall's five levels are accessible to mall patrons via the parking area which has over a thousand parking slots.

Best buys in town

The Robinsons Department Store at Metro East is the newest department store from Robinsons located at the second and third level of the mall. It covers approximately 12,000 square meters where shoppers can find the bests buys in town.

A complete line of ladies, men's and children's wear, cosmetic items, shoes, bags and accessories are also available. For the Christmas season, there are toys for kids, gifts and home items and decors.

RDS in Metro East joins the other department stores of Robinsons nationwide which includes its outlets at Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place in Manila, Novaliches, Imus, Cebu, Bacolod and Iloilo, Tutuban Center, Metropolis Star Alabang, Starmall Shaw, Waltermart Sta. Rosa, Laguna, and General Trias in Cavite. Its Pampanga outlet will open this December in time for the Christmas season.

Longer store hours

The Big R Supercenter, on the other hand, is situated at the mall's first level. Customers can enjoy various food and grocery items at wholesale prices, freshly baked breads and pastries, home-cooked dishes, plus a big and most complete fresh produce section.

The Big R is known for its size and modern environment, competitive pricing, no-membership policy and longer store hours. It opens as early as 7 a.m. and closes at 10 p.m.

"Shoppers can also visit the R Abenson, an appliance depot, General Merchandise, Wears and Accessories Departments where great bargains can be found," says Minda Carpio, RLC's vice president for leasing.

Food and retail outlets Hen Lin, Dunkin Donuts, RBX Rice Box, Moromax, Mr. Quickie and DHL can also be found at the spacious lobby of Big R.

The Food Court, at the fourth level of the mall, offers a complete variety of Filipino, Chinese and other popular dishes.

Scheduled to open by the end of this month are Steak Escape, Chin's Empress, Kamay Kainan, Hot Rice, Ming's Garden, Sizzling Delight, Ilonggo Grill, Cindy's, to mention a few.

Movies, entertainment

The latest local and foreign hits can be enjoyed at Robinsons Movieworld with its eight state-of-the-art cinemas in high-tech digital sound and projection technologies. These cinemas, located at the fifth level of the mall, are fully carpeted and with fitted fabric seats. Moviegoers can also take time out for snacks at food and drink counters at the cinema lobby.

Kids and adults alike can have fun with the latest video games and rides at the Dream Zone, located also at the fourth and fifth level.

Of course, there's also the Handyman, Robinsons "do-it-yourself" hardware store, which is situated near the fast-food center.

Complete mix of tenants

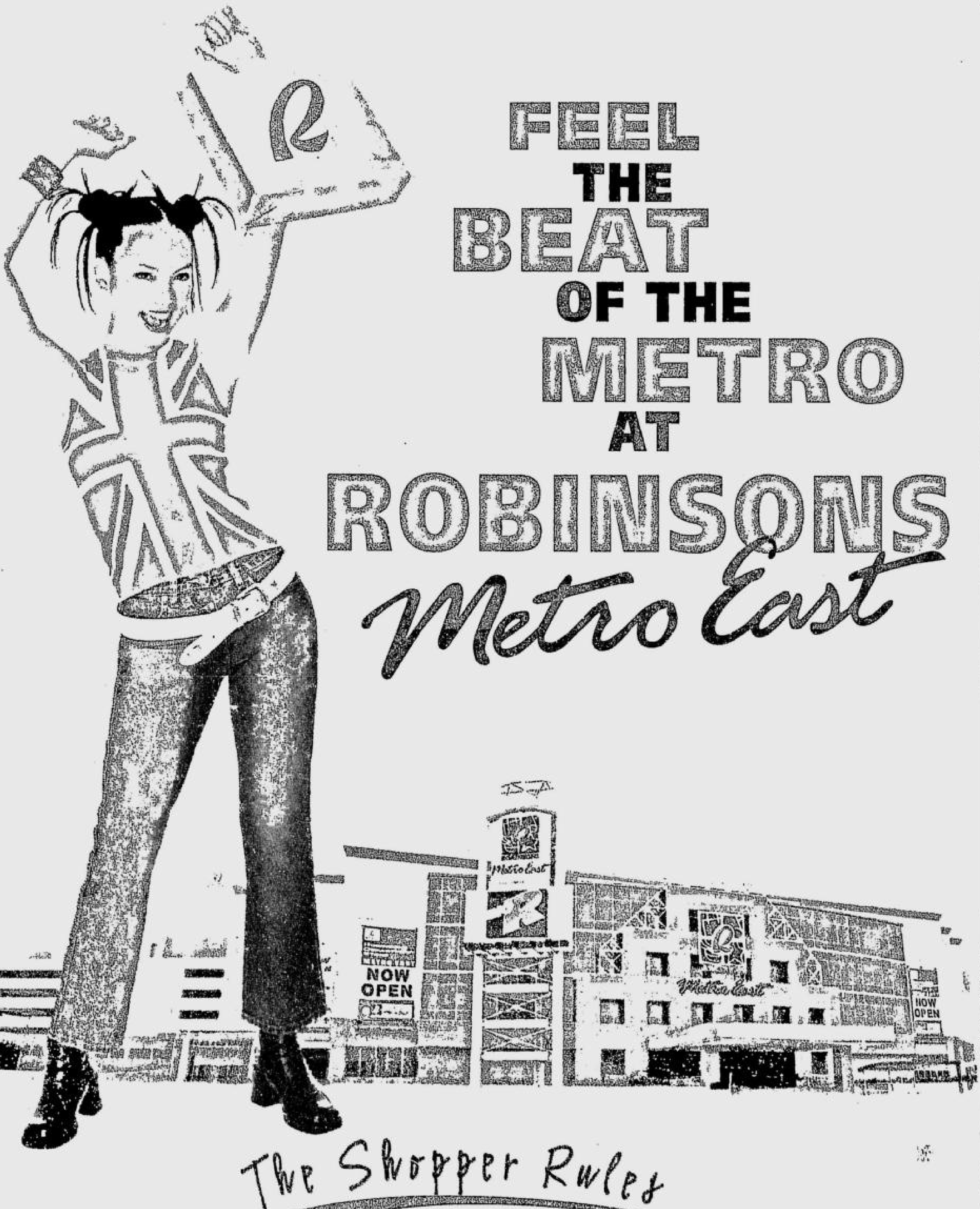
Complimenting the six major anchor stores are several top-of-the-line boutiques, popular food

A SHOPPING/E7

Big R Supercenter

THE BEST shopping experience began with Big R Supercenter with the opening of its Novaliches outlet last Dec. 7, and now, less than a year later, Big R has opened its 2nd store in Robinsons Metro East, and is about to open its 3rd in San Fernando, Pampanga, called Big R Starmills. Big R's mission is to be the low-priced provider of the everyday needs of the Filipino customers, and this could only be done, by achieving a presence in key areas, and by making sure that it is accessible to everyone. Big R's business is primarily retail, but studies revealed that there was significant demand for wholesale, so a wholesale area,

aptly called Big Packs was introduced recently in both stores. Big R also boasts of the biggest and most complete fresh produce area. To ensure that customers enjoy only the best and freshest items at very affordable prices, Big R opens its doors at 4 a.m. everyday to receive deliveries directly from suppliers. Big R Supercenter also houses an extensive Bakery and Ready to Eat line, where customers could enjoy freshly baked breads and pastries, and home-cooked dishes. There are also great bargains to be found in the general merchandise, wears and accessories department and appliance depot.



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NOW OPEN
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ROBINSONS GALLERIA ROBINSONS PLACE MANILA, NOVALICHES, IMUS, CEBU, BACOLOD ROBINSONS METRO EAST ROBINSONS TOWN MALL LOS BAÑOS

A shopping paradise in eastern suburbia . . . (continued)

chains and restaurants, and service outlets.

"The country's foremost retailers and fast-food chains have joined us in Metro East. The Bench Group will open four outlets—Bench and Her Bench, Human Bench Fix Salon and Dimensione, while the country's biggest fast-food chain Jollibee, will be operating their Jollibee, Greenwich and Chowking outlets inside the mall," relates Carpio.

Also included in the fine roster of tenants are high-end boutiques like Mossimo, Hush Puppies, Arrow, Levi's, Caterpillar, Nike Stadium, Esprit, Forever 21, Buffalo, Giordano, G-2000, Jag, Marithe Francois Girbaud, NafNaf, Hang Ten, The Body Shop, Guess, U2, People are People, Shoe Salon, Planet Sports and Dickies.

Popular local chain boutiques are likewise part of the tenant mix. These are Blue Soda, Maldita, The 99 Peso Store, Plains and Prints, Gibi Shoes, Janilyn, Silverworks, Toby's Sports, Penshoppe, Karimadon, F&H, Mendrez, Rusty Lopez, Broadway Gems, Madras and Unica Hija, Freeway, Genevieve Gozum, Collezione, Manel's, American Boulevard, Kidz Station, Tokyo Fashion, Planet Sports, Gingersnaps, Bizarre, Alberto Shoes, Kirei, Mobea Guerilla Wear, Tubby's, Marcella, Ruf, Evolution, Kamiseta and Anonymous.

Bayo is also there with clothes that always look fresh and light and happy.

Carpio says that Robinsons Metro East's tenant mix is a product of thorough marketing research which took into consideration the needs of its target markets. These led to Carpio and her leasing team to look for new tenant concepts and formats.

"We are proud to announce that Robinsons Metro East will be the first Philippine outlet for Popeyes, a popular US-based fast-food chain based in the East Coast. They are known for their tasty fried chicken and biscuit combo," Carpio enthuses.

First timers Knits and Stripes and Planet Perfume have also opted to open their outlets in the mall.

Well-known restaurants, Internet cafés, and fast-food chains like Pizza Hut, Pancake House, Red Ribbon, KFC, Shakey's, Kitaro, McDonald's, Max's Fried Chicken, Pho Bac, Netopia and Tokyo Tokyo complete the dining experience at Metro East.

The mall also offers a wide range of service outlets.

The list includes Holy Family Clinic, Great Image, Topwin Telecoms, Picture City, Megacellular, Top Brass Barbershop, Sabater Pascual Optical, Magno Optical, Sarabia Optical, Globe Telecoms, ABC Telecom, Photoline, Jesi Mendez, Freshaire, Time Gallery, Executive Optical, Philam Life, Let's Face It Salon, Dermexcell, Profile Dental Center, Elegant Time, Dermclinic, Robinsons Savings Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, Compass Internet, Fotofinish, The Lapid Dental Center, and Alfa-1.

Completing the tenant mix are specialty outlets Sabella, Lasting Impressions, Dreams Crosstitch, Audio Max, Astrovision, Bells Lighting, Leila's Carpet, Perfect Kitchen, Listening in Style, MG Infinity, Airwrkz, Artwork, GNC, Gamelandia, Expressions, Wonder Toys, Koichi and Sonyda Ichiban.

Accessibility

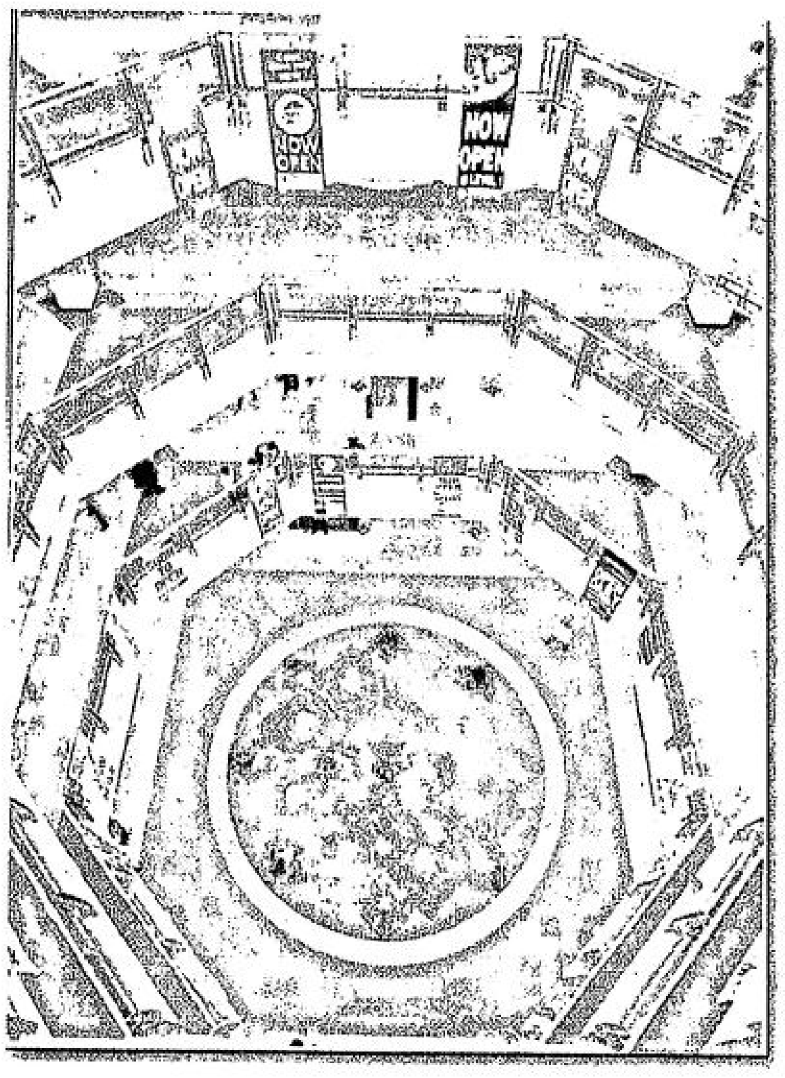
Robinsons Metro East is also very accessible.

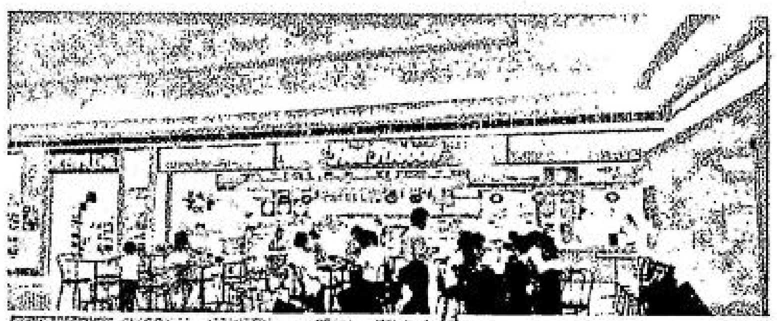
"The mall is only 20 minutes away from the Ortigas Business District. Posh villages and subdivisions are just but a stone's throw away from the mall's location," Carpio stresses.

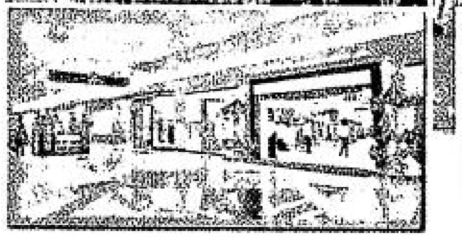
A public transportation stand for jeepneys and FX which ply various routes in the area was also provided.

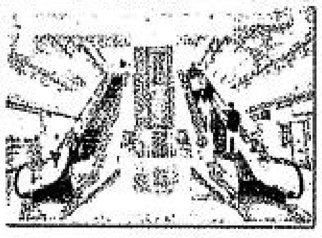
"Robinsons Metro East's strategic location has made the mall very attractive to both tenants and consumers alike," says Carpio.

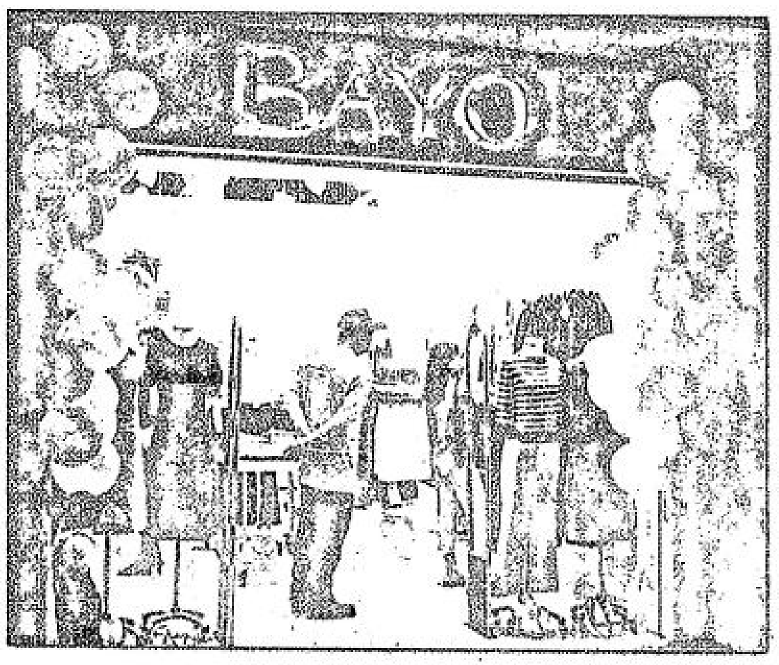
With the opening of Robinsons Metro East, Robinsons Land Corp. will continue to build world-class shopping malls as it looks forward to answer the needs of the Filipino consumers in the years to come.



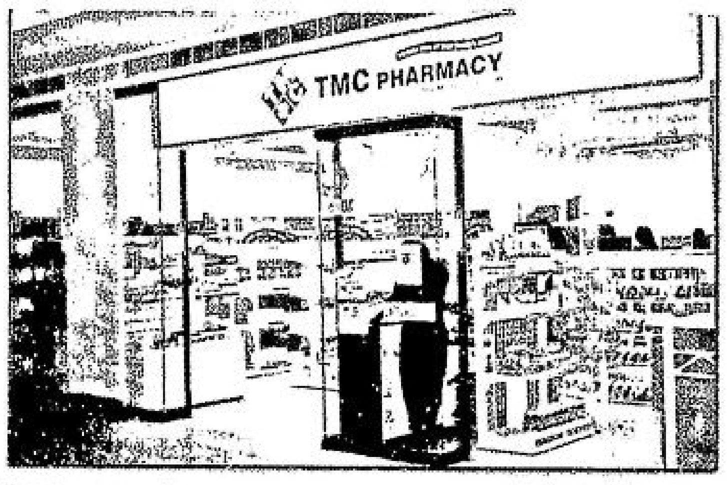








ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT STORE



TMC Pharmacy

THE MEDICINE Corner (TMC) is another brainchild of the Gokongwei Company, and is part of the Robinsons Retail Group, together with Robinsons Malls, Robinsons Supermarket, Robinsons Department Store, Handyman, Robinsons Convenience Stores, Inc., and Big R Supercenter.

The Medicine Corner was created due to the growing demand from consumers for convenient and friendly access to medicine, vitamins and health care. There is a huge gap in the supply and demand equation of the health retail industry, and thus, TMC hopes to fill the gap by providing several drugstore outlets in key locations all over the country.

TMC is the friendliest pharmacy around that offers fresh and high quality prescription and over-the-counter medicines at competitive prices with a mission of promoting healthy customers. Customers are assured that every TMC store shall be clean and attractive, and that they will be treated with excellent service. Most of all, they could be sure that the medicines they buy will be of the best quality.

Jesi Mendez
SALON FOR MEN AND WOMEN

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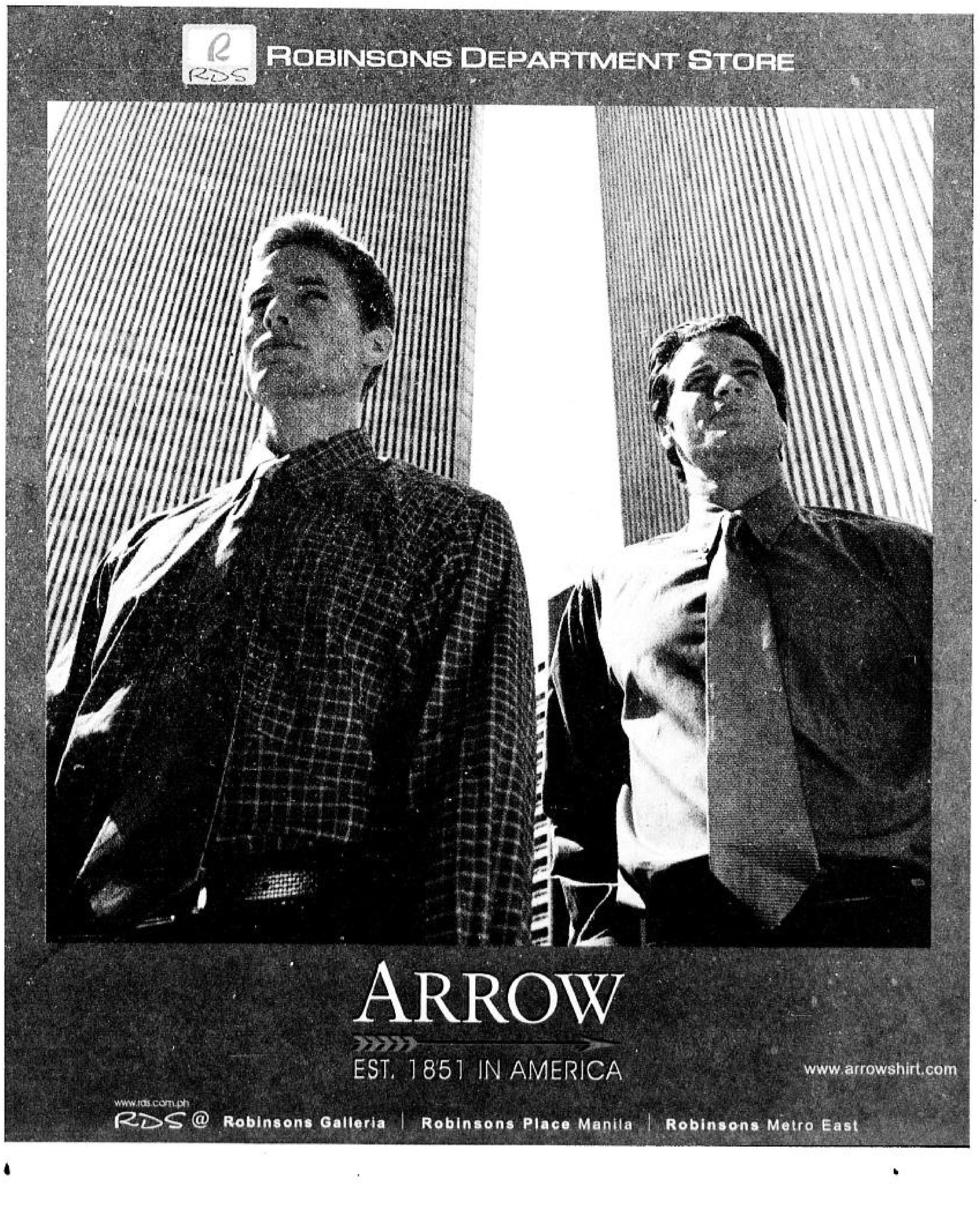
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Ces Drilon is taxi driver, bomb squad member and clown for a day

By Nestor U. Torre

TO MARK the anniversary of her "Pipol" program last Nov. 22, Ces Drilon hit upon the interestingly different idea of paying tribute to "ordinary" people by living their lives for 24 hours.

Typical day

For starters, her anniversary special invited viewers to take a peek into her own typical 24-hour day. She was up at 5 a.m. to see her kids off to school, then it was back to bed again to catch up on lost sleep until 9:30 a.m., when she bestirred herself to get ready for her workday at ABS-CBN.

From noontime on, it was one activity after another—taping spiels for "Pipol," pinch-hitting for Korina Sanchez on "TV Patrol," taking a much-needed break at a Rockwell Powerplant social, back to the studio for her late-night show, "Pointblank," followed by a staff meeting, etc. Only after that was Ces finally permitted to go home to sleep the sleep of the just and the overworked.

In the succeeding portion, Ces chose to join Makati City's bomb squad and was trained to respond to calls for help in handling suspicious-looking packages, and taught how to make bombs explode in a controlled situation.

Heroes

She was constantly reminded: "Don' touch the package, don't be a hero." But the bomb squad members *were* heroes, ready to risk their lives to prevent greater casualties.

Ces blanched when she was informed that four members of this bomb squad had died in the line of duty. When it was time to end her day-long apprenticeship with the group, she had total respect and admiration for its members.

Which was why she bewailed the cavalier way in which they were sometimes treated—delayed hazard pay, etc. And she hoped that people would better appreciate what the bomb squad was doing for them. Well, with her feature on them, that's more likely to happen.

Harassed

For a change of pace, Ces next became a taxi driver for a day—and night. The job turned out to be much more tedious and difficult than she expected, and at one point, she was so harassed that she blew her top when another cab driver swerved in front of her at a taxi line.

After a very long day, Ces joined some taxi drivers for a much-needed coffee break, and she was dismayed to find out that she had earned only half of what they did, and that was not even enough to fully pay for her "boundary!"

As in her first "immersion" with the bomb squad, Ces' stint as a cab driver left her with increased admiration for people who worked at this demanding job, day in and night out.

Passengers

For our part, we appreciated most how the taxi feature introduced us to many different kinds of passengers, some nice and others rather mean-spirited, truly a cross-section of the urban population—well, at least the people who can afford to ride in cabs.

To wrap up the anniversary special, Ces chose a lighter assignment: working at a *perya*, as apprentice clown, barker, the works. This was the least productive feature in the bunch because the *peryantes* didn't really do anything remarkable.

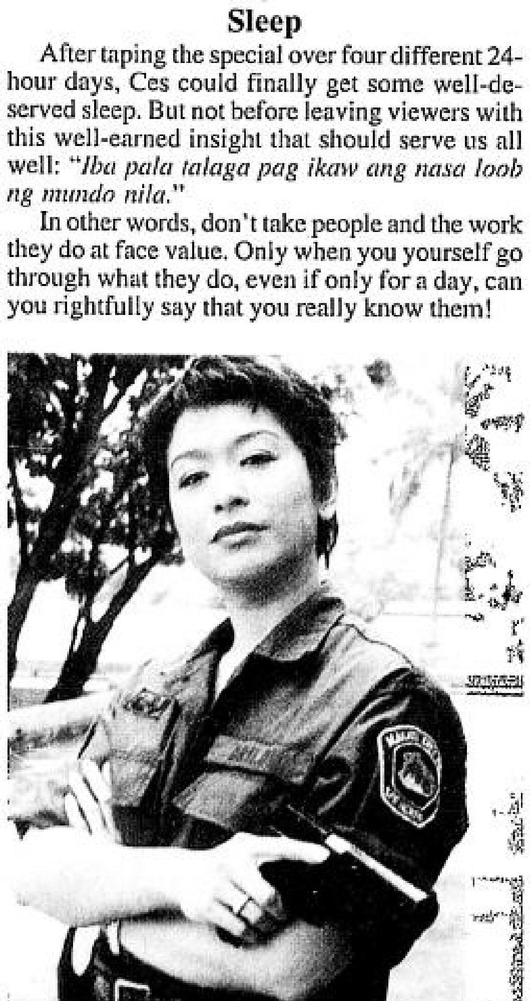
Still, Ces did share glimpses of their way of life, their work, the way that some of their sideshows exploit physical handicaps and deformities.

Sleep

After taping the special over four different 24-hour days, Ces could finally get some well-deserved sleep. But not before leaving viewers with this well-earned insight that should serve us all well: "*Iba pala talaga pag ikaw ang nasa loob ng mundo nila.*"

In other words, don't take people and the work they do at face value. Only when you yourself go through what they do, even if only for a day, can you rightfully say that you really know them!

THE BROADCAST journalist is all smiles—before spending 24 hours as a taxi driver.



CES in full battle gear as a member of the Makati bomb squad.

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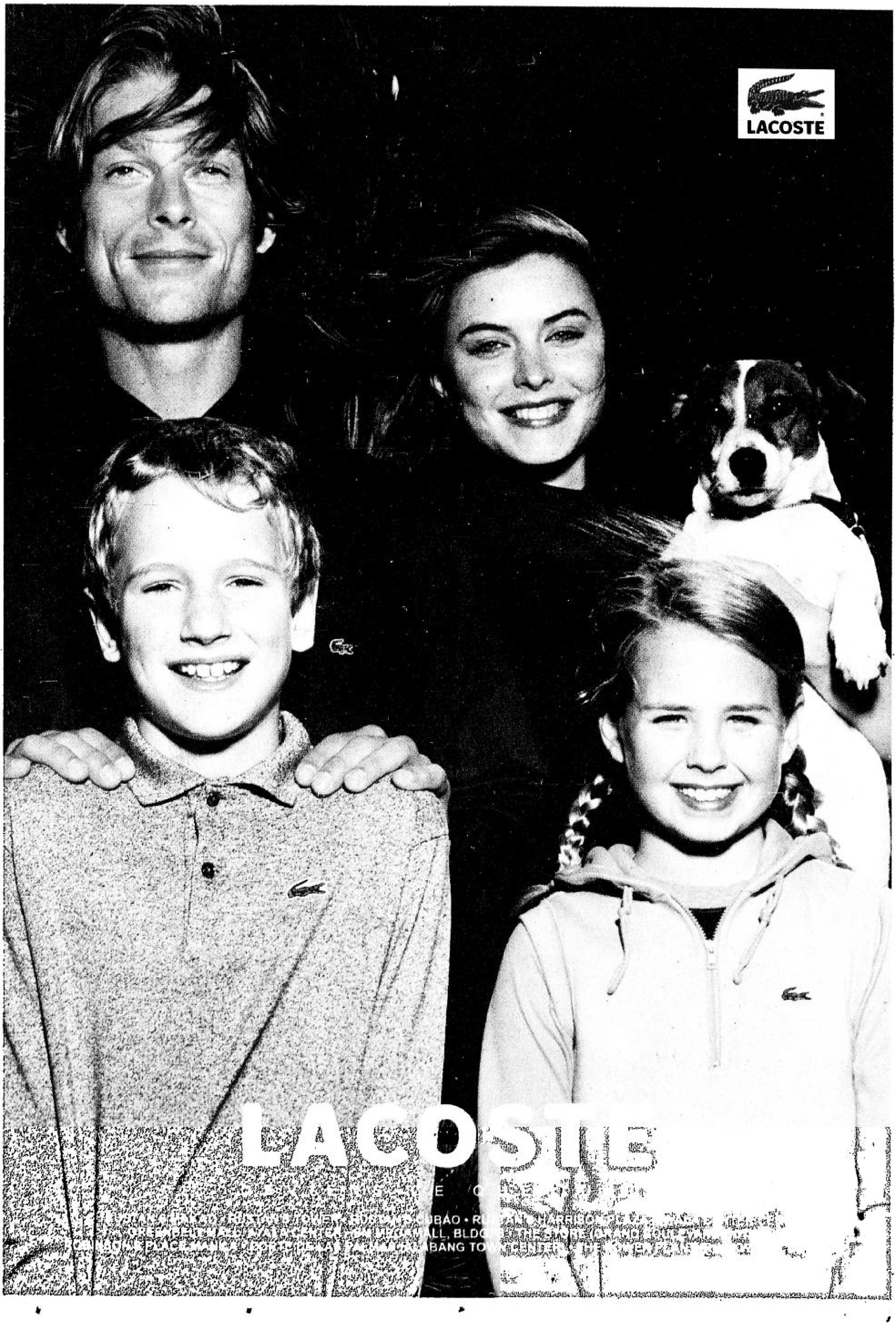

Pops Fernandez performs at the Music Museum Dec. 5

FERNANDEZ. Birthday show.

By Edmund L. Sicam

HOW refreshing to attend a Pops Fernandez presscon and not hear the "M" words—Martin Nievera and her failed Marriage—discussed to death. Well, another "M" word found its way into the Q&A, and that was Troy Montero, and whether Pops was responsible for his breakup with Nikki Valdez. She dismissed that with the flick of a finger, saying Troy was a friend, that's all. Next question, please?

Intimate lunch

Otherwise, the intimate lunch with a few entertainment writers at the Dome, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, was devoted to her concert on Dec. 6 at 9 p.m. at the Music Museum, part of the "Crossover Presents" series (call 891-5610 for details). It is a monthly presentation that highlights the artistry of leading Filipino singers and musicians. The series started April at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Oriental.

Previous performers have included Lani Misalucha, Jaya, Joey G., Regine Velasquez, Janno Gibbs, Basil Valdez and Ogie Alcasid.

This time it's Pops' turn to do a show "that will be presented like a movie of her life. The stage backdrop will serve as a screen for video clips of Pops. She will go back in time to her childhood, her beginnings in the industry, her awakenings to the joys and pains of love, her metamorphosis into a woman, mother and an industry icon. The show will celebrate the best and the sweetest days of her life."

Refreshing change

Quite timely too, since Pops is celebrating her birthday. Many of the songs featured in the show have never been performed by the Concert Queen so it's going to be a refreshing change. The repertoire will include such songs as "The Best Days," "Constantly," "Every Little Thing He Does Is Magic," "Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang," "Ang Aking Pamasko," and "The Last Day."

In between questions about the show, the discussion drifted to mundane topics like diets, a favorite subject during sumptuous lunches. Despite the delicious offerings, Pops preferred to munch on her salad.

The singer said she doesn't take diet pills because she's afraid of the side effects. Instead, she sheds unwanted pounds by donning boxing gloves and venting her ire on a punching bag. No, she hasn't gone into the ring yet to spar with an actual opponent but that will come eventually.

We talked about things that happen onstage when she is performing, like forgetting the lyrics to a song or not hitting a high note. Luckily, according to Pops she has always hit her notes although at times, she does forget some lines so she points the microphone at the members of the audience and asks them to sing instead.

Teleprompter

These days, however, she can count on the teleprompter, a TV monitor which runs all the lyrics of her song, a far cry from the "idiot boards" of before where lyrics were printed on manila paper with pentel pens. Pity the singer, when the person holding the board had it upside down or forgot to go to the next page!

Pops shared that no matter how sick she is on the day of the performance, her voice somehow miraculously comes back during the show as if she wasn't sick at all.

She was definitely relaxed that day, a far cry from another presscon we attended when she shed copious tears because an entertainment columnist had insinuated that she and Piolo Pascual had something going on. She spent the time airing her side and forgot the main reason for that presscon.

The birthday girl sees 2001 as a good year now that she and Martin are on better terms and she's having a grand time with her two boys, Robin and Ram. Her career continues to flourish with more concerts coming up and a movie with Robin Padilla, "Videoke King" about to be shown.

Concert series

Early next year, she will be seen on all Fridays and Saturdays of January in a concert series, "Weekend with Pops" at Greenbelt Onstage in Makati. That series is produced by a new outfit, Arian Works Management Coroporation, which picked Pops for its initial foray into the world of show business.

Gay volleyball team members score in 'The Iron Ladies'

"THE IRON Ladies" tells a true story about a Thai male volleyball team that won the national championships in 1996 with the team consisting mostly of gays, transvestites and transsexuals.

Discrimination

Mon, who plays lead, is a talented volleyball player but he constantly fails to be selected for various teams because he was gay. Jung, Mon's best friend, also has his share of discrimination but always looks at the situation with optimism. Their chance comes when a new head coach, Coach Bee is selected by the provincial government to put together a winning team.

The coach then announces an open tryout and eventually selects both Jung and Mon to be on the team, while some of the more macho players resign in protest.

In order to form a new volleyball team, the coach asks Mon and Jung to contact a few of their friends to join. They first get Nong, a gay sergeant in the army; Pia, a transsexual star of a cabaret show and Wit, the only son of a wealthy Thai-Chinese family, whose parents are clueless that their son is gay. As a result, the entire team virtually ends up gay, a bizarre situation in Thailand.

Champions

The team progressively comes together and begins to play like champions, does well in the play-offs and becomes a finalist for the national championship. Facing mean taunts from their strong opponents and officials of the league become hurtful and degrading to the team and their coach.

The problems and issues they encounter in their everyday lives serve as a challenge to them throughout the finals, as they fight back with dignity and honor to emerge as true champions, and to demonstrate to their opponents and to the nation what true sportsmanship and respect for oneself are all about.

Featuring the voices of Eric Quizon (Mon), John Lapus (Jung),Raymond Bagatsing (Chai), Aiza Seguerra (Coach Bee), Jeffrey Quizon (Nong,), Candy Pangilinan (Piă) and Wowie de Guzman (Wit).

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Twentieth Century Fox announces 2002 line-up

AS IF having Tom Cruise and Tom Hanks in its slate were not enough, Twentieth Century Fox has further raised the bar by tapping A-list directors Steven Spielberg and George Lucas to reinforce the studio's 2002 line-up.

Preview

Below is a preview of these potential blockbusters:

"Star Wars Episode 2: Attack of the Clones." George Lucas' phenomenal "Star Wars" saga continues with the much buzzed-about second episode. Ten years after the events of "The Phantom Menace," not only has the galaxy undergone significant change, but so have our familiar heroes Obi Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor), Padmé Amidala (Natalie Portman) and Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) as they are thrown together again for the first time since the Trade Federation invasion of Naboo. As relationships form and powerful forces collide, these heroes face choices that will impact not only their own fates, but the destiny of the Republic.

"Minority Report." A Steven Spielberg film starring Tom Cruise, this eagerly anticipated thriller is set in a futuristic judicial system in which killers are arrested and convicted before they commit murder.

HANKS. Plays a hit man in "Road to Perdition."

Angel of Death

"Road to Perdition." Director Sam Mendes' much-awaited follow-up to his Oscar-winning "American Beauty." In this disturbing suspense-thriller, Tom Hanks plays legendary hit man Michael O'Sullivan who's known to friends and enemies as the Angel of Death. But when hired assassins kill his wife and younger son, O'Sullivan embarks on a startling journey of revenge.

"Behind Enemy Lines." An action thriller in which American Navy pilot (Owen Wilson) is shot down over enemy territory and struggles to survive the relentless pursuit of a ruthless secret police enforcer, a deadly tracker, and countless hostile troops. With time running out, the injured pilot's commanding officer (Gene Hackman) goes against orders to carry out a desperate rescue mission.

Serial killer

"From Hell." Based upon the legendary serial killer "Jack The Ripper," inspector Frederick Abberline (Johnny Depp) investigates the mysterious murders of prostitutes within the Whitechapel district of London. A suspense-thriller in the tradition of "Hannibal" and "Sleepy Hollow."

"Shallow Hal." A touching romantic-comedy from the directors of "There's Something About Mary," this delightful film revolves around Hal (Jack Black) who dates only women embodying physical perfection. But all that changes after Hal has an unexpected run-in with a self-help guru who hypnotizes him into seeing the beauty that exists even in the least physically appealing women. Hal is smitten after meeting the morbidly obese Rosemary, as he sees her kindness and humor translated into the physical perfection that is Gwyneth Paltrow.

Bank robbers

"Bandits." Oscar-winner Barry Levinson directs this true story of two bank robbers and the woman they both love. When Joe (Bruce Willis) and his partner, Terry (Billy Bob Thornton) escape from prison, they resort to robbing banks in order to finance their scheme for a new—and somewhat legitimate life—in Mexico. Their operation is running smoothly until they have an unexpected run-in with Kate (Cate Blanchett), who is drawn to the thieves as a way to escape her ordinary life.

"Black Knight." Fast-talking con man Jamal Walker (Martin Lawrence) has big-time plans—but for now he's stuck in a menial job at a medi-

TWENTIETHCENTURY/P.E4

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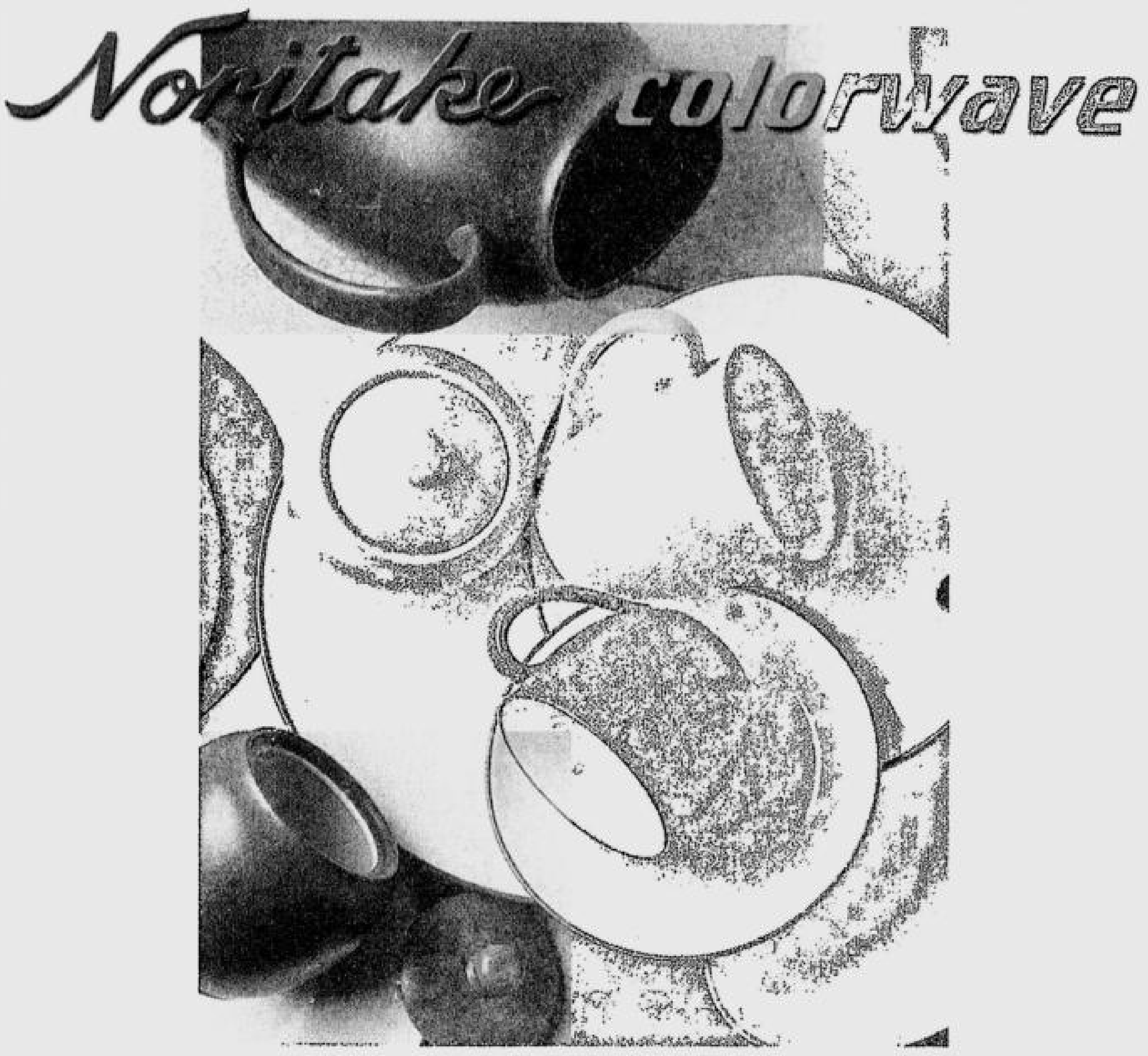

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movies

- **GENTXT Movie Night " Rock Star"**
  Date : December 08
  Time : 8:00 pm
  Venue: Glorietta 4
  THX Cinema 3

events

- **GENTXT Billiards Night featuring "The Groove"**
  Date : December 04
  Time : 7:00 pm
  Venue: Gameworx,Festival Mall
- **M2M Live!**
  Date : December 07
  Time : 6:00 pm
  Venue: World Trade Centre, Manila
- **"The Company" Live**
  Date : December 14
  Time : 9:00 pm
  Venue: Summit Bar,
  Royal Mandaya Hotel, Davao
- **Hard Rock Concert Series**
  Date : December 12 (South Border)
  December 20 (FreeStyle)
  December 29 (Side A)
  Time : 9:30 pm
  Venue: Hard Rock Café, Glorietta 3

parties

- **StreetLife Re-Opening Party**
  Date : December 12
  Time : 7:30 pm
  Venue : Glorietta 2
- **GENTXT Winter Rush**
  Date : December 15
  Time : 9:00 pm
  Venue : Where Else,
  Hotel Inter-Continental
- **GRILLA Christmas Party**
  Date : December 19
  Time : 8:00 pm
  Venue : Grilla, Libis
- **Skybox 1st Anniversary Year-end Party**
  Date : December 28
  Time : 9:00 pm
  Venue : Skybox Restaurant & Bar,
  Baguio

dining

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Twentieth Century Fox . . . (From page E 3)

eval theme park. After slipping into the park's fetid "moat," Jamal finds himself in 14th century England—a world of knights in shinning armor, a wicked king and damsels in distress. The Middle Ages will never be the same after Jamal uses his 21st Century street smarts to help a down-and-out knight and a beautiful woman defeat an evil king.

"Ice Age." Set against the onslaught of the ice age, a world filled with wonder and danger, this spectacular animated feature revolves around three unforgettable characters: a wooly mammoth, a saber-toothed tiger, and a sloth, who unite to return a human baby to his tribe.

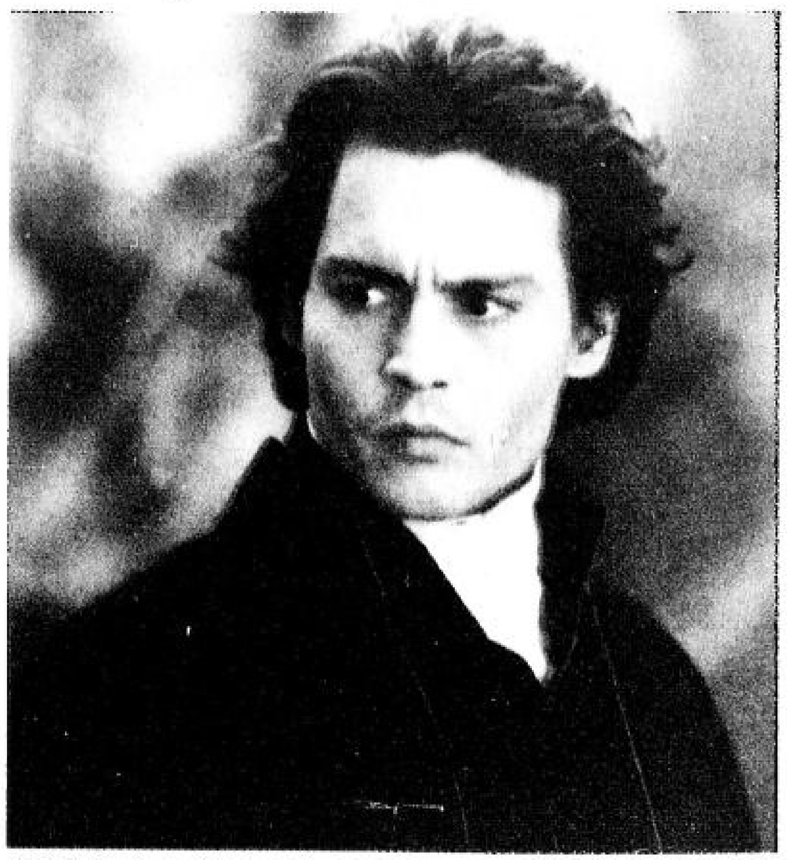
Law student

"Hart's War." A riveting suspense-thriller starring Bruce Willis and Colin Farrell. In the film, Lt. Tommy Hart (Farrell) is a second year law student who is enlisted as an officer's aide in World War II due to his father's political pull. When he is captured and thrown into a German prisoner of war camp, top ranking Col. William Mc Namara (Willis) assigns him to defend a black POW accused of murdering a fellow white prisoner. In preparing a defense for his client, Tommy stumbles upon a plot that will force him to choose between his country, his own morality and his life.

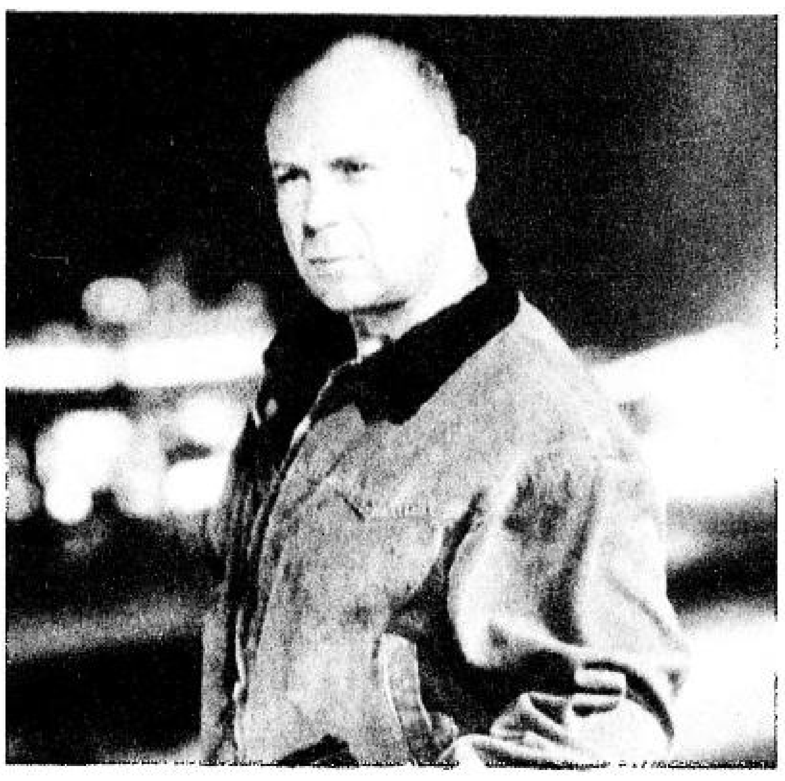
Dead-end lives

"Joe Somebody." Joe (Tim Allen) is a divorced corporate everyman whose dead-end personal and professional lives are turned around after the office bully publicly humiliates him in front of Joe's daughter. As Joe trains for a rematch—and give himself a makeover-he begins an unexpected ascent up the corporate ladder.

"The Deep End." A mother (Tilda Swinton) wakes early one morning to find the body of her seventeen-year-old son's lover impaled on an anchor on the beach of their lakefront home. With her husband away and nowhere to turn, she makes a reckless decision to move the body and hide it in the lake. Soon she finds herself and her family in even greater danger when the body is found.



DEPP. On the trail of Jack the Ripper.



WILLIS. Portrays a colonel in "Hart's War."

'OUT COLD'

Low-rent remake of teen-sex comedy

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—How cool would it be to work at Bull Mountain? 'Cause really, you don't work. As the guys in "Out Cold" prove, you snowboard all day, then drink beer, then snowboard some more.

Sometimes you snowboard WHILE you drink beer, in a game called "King of the Mountain." See, you have to board down the entire mountain with a full mug in your hand, and whoever has the most beer left at the bottom is the king. Dude! It should be an Olympic sport!

Abrupt halt

But one day, the high-altitude hijinks come to an abrupt halt for Rick (Jason London) and his slacker buddies, Luke (Zach Galifianakis), Anthony (Flex Alexander) and Pig Pen (Derek Hamilton).

Entrepreneur John Majors (Lee Majors)— a stereotypical, cigar-chomping good ole boy who wears a cowboy hat—buys the Alaskan resort and turns it into a yuppie haven, complete with sushi and espresso.

This all makes the movie sound far more complicated than it is, however.

It's basically a low-rent remake of the 1984 low-rent teen-age sex comedy "Hot Dog . . . The Movie," instead it has snowboarders instead of skiers. 'Cause, like, nobody skis anymore, duh!

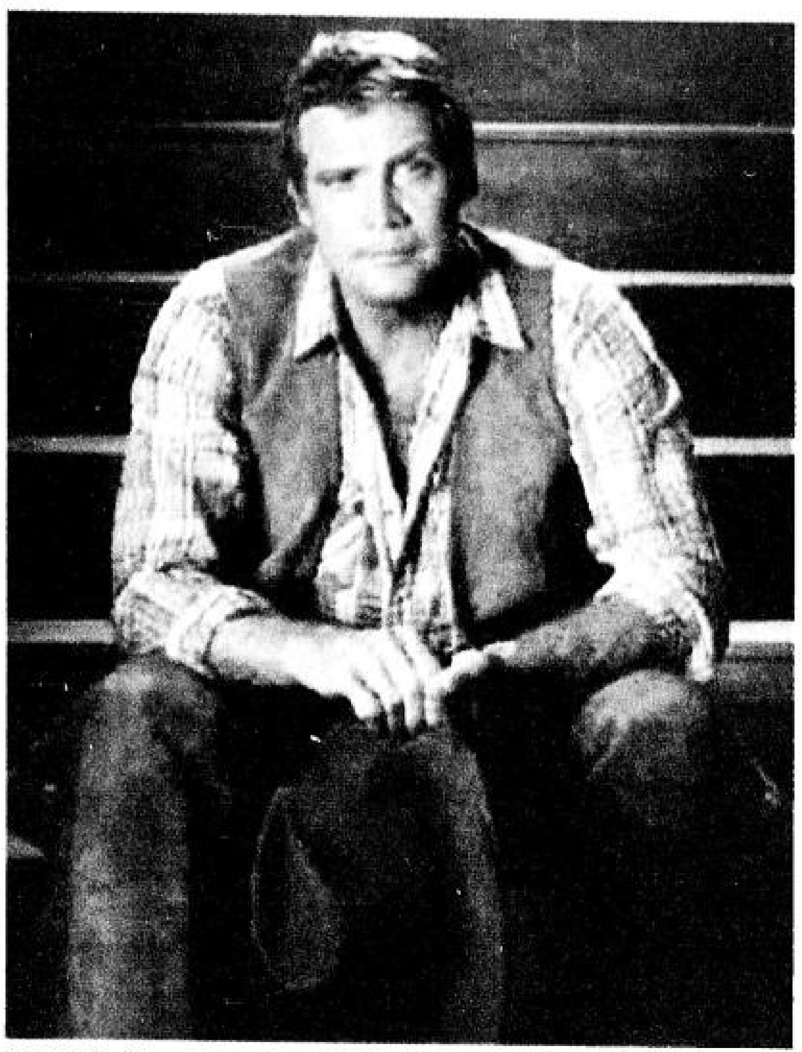
First-time directors

Brendan and Emmett Malloy—first-time directors credited as "The Malloys," as if we're supposed to know who they are—have basically created a feature-length version of those videos that are on a constant loop at surf and ski shops. The snowboarding IS impressive, though, featuring stunts from some of the world's top pro boarders.

It's easy to make fun of this movie for being mindless, sophomoric, predictable, you name it - especially with Majors, the Six Million Dollar Has-Been, as its big-name star. And it is all those things. But the characters are pretty likable, and the cinematography of snowboarders carving perfect S-turns through pristine snow is gorgeous.

And "Out Cold" wouldn't be complete without a Playmate of the Year—the blond, buxom Victoria Silvstedt (1997) replacing the blond, buxom Shannon Tweed (1982), who appeared in "Hot Dog" before going on to make "Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death" and "Cold Sweat."

But we digress.



MAJORS. Cigar-chomping good ole boy with a cowboy hat.

Stepdaughter

Silvstedt, an Anna Nicole Smith look-alike, plays Inga, John Majors' Swedish stepdaughter, who likes to ride mechanical bulls and go hot-tubbing in the snow, naturally.

Majors' other daughter, Anna (Caroline Dhavernas), happens to be a girl Rick met and immediately fell in love with in Cancun. So when she shows up with her dad at the Bull Mountain pub where Rick and his buddies hang out, he gets to quip in a shameless "Casablanca" reference, "Of all the bars in all the ski towns in Alaska, why did she have to walk into this one?"

But Anna is engaged to be married, and everyone knows that Jenny (A.J. Cook), a cute, laid-back snowboarder chick, is a much better match for Rick anyway.

So will Rick and his friends take back the mountain in the name of all that is pure and right in this world? Will Rick and Jenny end up together?

Answers

Dude, you know the answers to those questions.

"Out Cold," a Touchstone Pictures release, runs 89 minutes. *AP*

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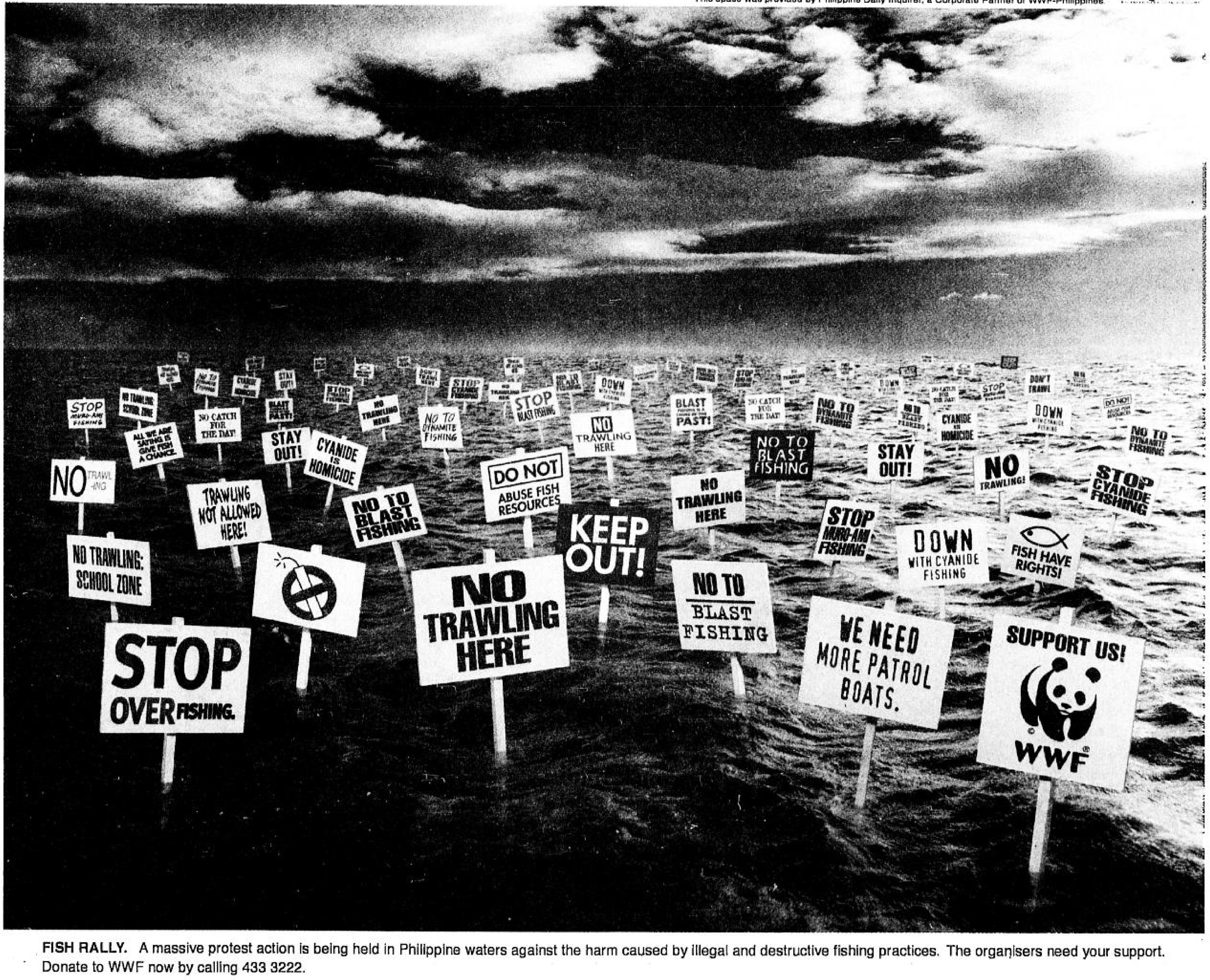

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NO TO DYNAMITE FISHING
STOP BLAST FISHING
NO TRAWLING HERE
DOWN WITH CYANIDE FISHING
BLAST FISHING IS A THING OF THE PAST!
NO TO DYNAMITE FISHING
NO TO BLAST FISHING
STAY OUT!
NO TRAWLING!
DON'T TRAWL
NO TO DYNAMITE FISHING
NO TRAWL-ING
TRAWLING NOT ALLOWED HERE!
NO TO BLAST FISHING
DO NOT ABUSE FISH RESOURCES
NO TRAWLING HERE
STOP CYANIDE FISHING
NO TRAWLING: SCHOOL ZONE
KEEP OUT!
STOP MURO-AMI FISHING
DOWN WITH CYANIDE FISHING
FISH HAVE RIGHTS!
STOP OVERFISHING.
NO TRAWLING HERE
NO TO BLAST FISHING
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Promising talent lights up the musical-theater scene

By Rito P. Asilo

IF you think an actress' love for performing can only be realized in a country's capital like Metro Manila, think again. Rochelle Venuti proves that you can hone your thespic chops even when you're in the country's Durian capital, Davao City.

Plays

She started out in UST's Artistang Artlets, doing plays like "Bayan-Bayanan" and "Kasalan sa Likod ng Simbahan," and joining the university's renowned UST Action Singers. Encouraged and inspired by the experience, she then ventured into the band scene as a lead vocalist. But when Rochelle relocated in Mindanao, the distance did not deter her from finding work as a performer.

She says, "I truly missed doing theater! I was already married for eight years when I read an ad in a local paper announcing that there would be auditions for the local staging of Musicat's "Sino Ka Ba, Jose Rizal?" I told myself I was going to be in that production in whatever capacity they'd take me—*kahit* production!"

High standard

But Rochelle's talent not only brought her to perform alongside singer/actor Ogie Alcasid, it also paved the way for her to play one of the musical's lead characters, Teodora Alonzo, the hero's well-loved mother!

"I performed with actors flown in from Manila, and it was such a thrill! They brought in their professional experience and a very high standard that I felt I had to measure up to. The local actors were so inspired to work with the Manila actors. But I personally felt I couldn't pass up the chance to work with the play's director, whose previous productions included the classics, 'Katy!' and Magsimula Ka.'

If Rochelle was in awe of the opportunity to work with the director, she couldn't believe it was not going to be her last chance to work with him. Then came "Magnificat," the Cebuano version.

When Margie Moran-Floirendo decided to come up with a Visayan version of the popular Ryan Cayabyab musical, she thought of using Davao's pool of talented local actors.

They flew in a couple of the original cast to join the local actors and to jumpstart the play in the vernacular, but when the dust settled, Rochelle ended up playing the very challenging role of the Blessed Virgin Mary!

Venues

Rochelle says, "I sing regularly in venues like the Marco Polo Hotel and other top spots in the city. I've done quite a number of local productions, including local stagings of "Walang Sugat" (as Juana) and "The Great White Way," where I played Christine ("Phantom of the Opera") and Nancy ("Oliver"), but nothing is closer to my heart than 'Magnificat.'

"*Dito talaga ako nahirapan kasi napaka*-demanding *ng* role, vocally and acting-wise. It was hard to sing and cry at the same time. I was always drained after a performance. Also, I felt humbled by the experience of performing the role of he Blessed Mother I didn't know if anybody deserved to play her.

"'Magnificat' is one of the simplest plays I've ever known, devoid of grand costumes and giant sets, but it hits you straight in the heart!"

Asked if she still has a dream role she wants to do in the future, she smiles and says, "I would love to do more plays. My husband and I manage a new restaurant (Prego) in Davao and a household with three kids, but performing has become a important part of me.

"But a dream role? *Wala na siguro*. I've done the best. For me, no role could ever be as fulfilling as that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and 'Magnificat' is the best musical."

When Rochelle gave birth to her first daughter early this year, she named her Maria.

VENUTI. Played the Virgin Mother in Cebuano version of "Magnificat."

Ai-Ai all set for Araneta Coliseum show tonight

By Ricky T. Gallardo

AI-AI delas Alas tells us she's achieved contentment and inner peace. "*Dati kung magtrabaho ako, parang wala ng bukas, pero* now, I have learned to take things in stride. To enjoy the moment, to laugh at myself more and to relax *lalo na* when things do not turn out the way I planned them to be."

Ai-Ai shares that she has also made her family her first priority, adding that she finds the greatest satisfaction as single mom to her kids. Her personal life is also blissful, despite her admission recently about swinging both ways.

For tonight, Ai-Ai wishes that good things continue to happen to her and that her much-awaited show, billed as "Out of this World Na Me, Araneta Na Kasi!" will be a huge success, just like her previous outings.

Tonight, Pops Fernandez will make-up for her squabble with Ai-Ai last year by headlining the roster of guests, which includes The Hunks, Side A, Patricia Javier, Jaya, the Monserrat Male Ensemble, and the Whiplash Dancers. As always, the show is being directed by Floy Quintos.

Ai-Ai is aware that playing the Big Dome is a formidable challenge, considering that the recent concerts there of Jaya, Gary V., Janno Gibbs and even Freestyle didn't do well at the box-office. But she remains undaunted and believes that everyone needs a good laugh.

Franco's passion, Ayen's promise

At the concert of Franco Laurel last weekend, two things were evident:

Franco's passion as a performer is potent and commanding, while his wife Ayen shows a lot of promise as a concert artist.

Franco opened with "I Can See Clearly Now" and from his opening spiels alone, we knew right away that we would be listening to even more positive songs. His "Black Medley" which included songs of R. Kelly, Brian Mc Knight and Baby Face, thrilled the crowd.

The surprise of the evening was Ayen Munji, the former Brunei princess turned Mrs. Franco Laurel. It was smart for her to choose the right songs (specifically Joey Albert's greatest hits) for her debut on the concert scene. Her "Moulin Rouge" medley with Franco was also polished and spontaneous.

DELAS ALAS. Formidable challenge.

Janice's new commercial

Perhaps you've seen how Janice de Belen's new commercial has capitalized on her current domestic turmoils.

In the final seconds of the TVC, Janice utters: "*Kaya ako at ang* (product), *walang iwanan, Di katulad ng iba* (pause) *dyan*! No matter how much pain her ex-husband has dealt her, allowing a product to "use" the current state of her troubled domestic life is beyond our comprehension.

Expect the unexpected at the NU Rock awards

Now on its 8th year, the NU 107 Rock awards has become the most-awaited event of local rock music aficionados. That's why on Dec. 6, thousands are expected to flock to the PICC grounds to join in the revelry to honor Pinoy rock musicians.

Fourteen awards will be given this year, and aside from a few new names, the battles are to be fought by the veterans who have remained formidable all these years. Among those who are assured of taking home some trophies are Wolfgang and the comebacking group, The Dawn.

Slapshock and Sandwich, two of the most highly regarded groups which won the Best New Artist plums for 1999 and 2000, respectively, are among those who have garnered the most nominations.

Barbie's Cradle, Radioactive Sago and Brownbeat All-Starts are also touted to be in the running. Unlike in other award-giving bodies, there's no leakage in this one, so one is never sure until the envelopes are finally opened.

Like in previous outings, this year's show carries with it a theme: "2001 A Rock Odyssey." We'll see if NU 107 can take us to this year's ultimate musical journey.

Q: How does The Inquirer protect small fry?

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5 cronies found keeping $100M in Swiss banks
Use of children by MILF assailed

A. We keep an eye on the big fish.

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News that makes a difference

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'Sidewalks' director is no Woody Allen

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—"Sidewalks of New York" has all the trappings of a Woody Allen film—a Manhattan setting, an ensemble cast blundering through the entanglements of passion, the little conceit of characters speaking in pseudo-interviews about their love lives.

Only writer, director and co-star Edward Burns is no Woody Allen.

Fraternal framework

Minus the fraternal framework that underpinned his clever "The Brothers McMullen" and the lesser "She's the One," Burns is back on the familiar turf of romantic comedy with dramatic overtones.

Unfortunately, the humor of "Sidewalks of New York" pales next to that of "Brothers McMullen" or even "She's the One."

"Sidewalks" borders on dour, presenting main characters lacking charm whose melodramatic ramblings and rantings hold little interest for viewers.

The principal cast delivers solid performances, notably Stanley Tucci, Rosario Dawson and Burns' ex-girlfriend Heather Graham. Tucci's character, though, is so contemptibly deceptive and unfeeling that he becomes an eyesore every time he's on screen, while Burns' whiny alter-ego is a plain old bore.

Self-absorption

And Burns' script sets the cast adrift in such irritating self-absorption that a documentary on the marital strife of Henry VIII would be refreshing by comparison.

The only sparks of life come from Dennis Farina and Nadia Dajani in small roles. Farina plays a crude, grotesquely suntanned lecher who offers Burns' character guidance on bedding women. He's the caricature of sexist caricatures, but Farina plays it with such earnestness he makes the guy seem authentic.

Dajani contributes a saucy turn as Hilary, a frustrated wife who finds sexual satisfaction in an affair with her gynecologist. ("It's heaven," she coos. "I mean, think about it. If there's one thing that guy knows about ...")

Loose structures

The loose structure of "Sidewalks" superficially resembles the revolving-door trysts of Arthur Schnitzler's play "La Ronde," with Burns' romance-impaired New Yorkers crossing paths and trading pillow partners.

There's Tommy (Burns), newly separated from his girlfriend (Callie Thorne). Tommy has a dalliance with Maria (Dawson) while making half-hearted passes at Annie (Graham). Annie's married to Griffin (Tucci), who carries on an affair with teen-ager Ashley (Brittany Murphy), who's also pursued by Ben (David Krumholtz), a doorman simultaneously trying to reunite with Maria, his ex-wife.

Michael Leydon Campbell plays dual roles as Ben's scruffy East Village pal and as Hilary's husband, a poster boy for midlife crises.

Convoluted dynamics

Burns fails to craft an integrated whole out of these convoluted dynamics. There's little cohesion in the meanderings of the characters, who bump into each other by chance far too often, as though in Burns' world, Manhattan were about as populous as Mayberry.

Scenes drag on endlessly, overloaded with mundane bickering among characters. Burns succeeds in creating naturalistic dialogue: It's so natural, it's as boring as most real-life conversations would be on screen.

The narrative clumsily interweaves responses from the cast to an unseen, unexplained interviewer, who seems to have outlandishly open-door access to the characters to query them on their sex lives.

BURNS AND GRAHAM. Melodramatic ramblings and rantings.

Intimacy

The hand-held camera work and documentary style do lend intimacy to "Sidewalks." But who'd want to be intimate with these people is anybody's guess.

The film had been scheduled for release Sept. 21 but was delayed because of the terrorist attacks, the notion of romantic shenanigans on the streets of New York seeming none too savory after Sept. 11. Two months later, the movie is no more welcome, though.

"Sidewalks of New York," a Paramount Classics release, runs 108 minutes. *AP*

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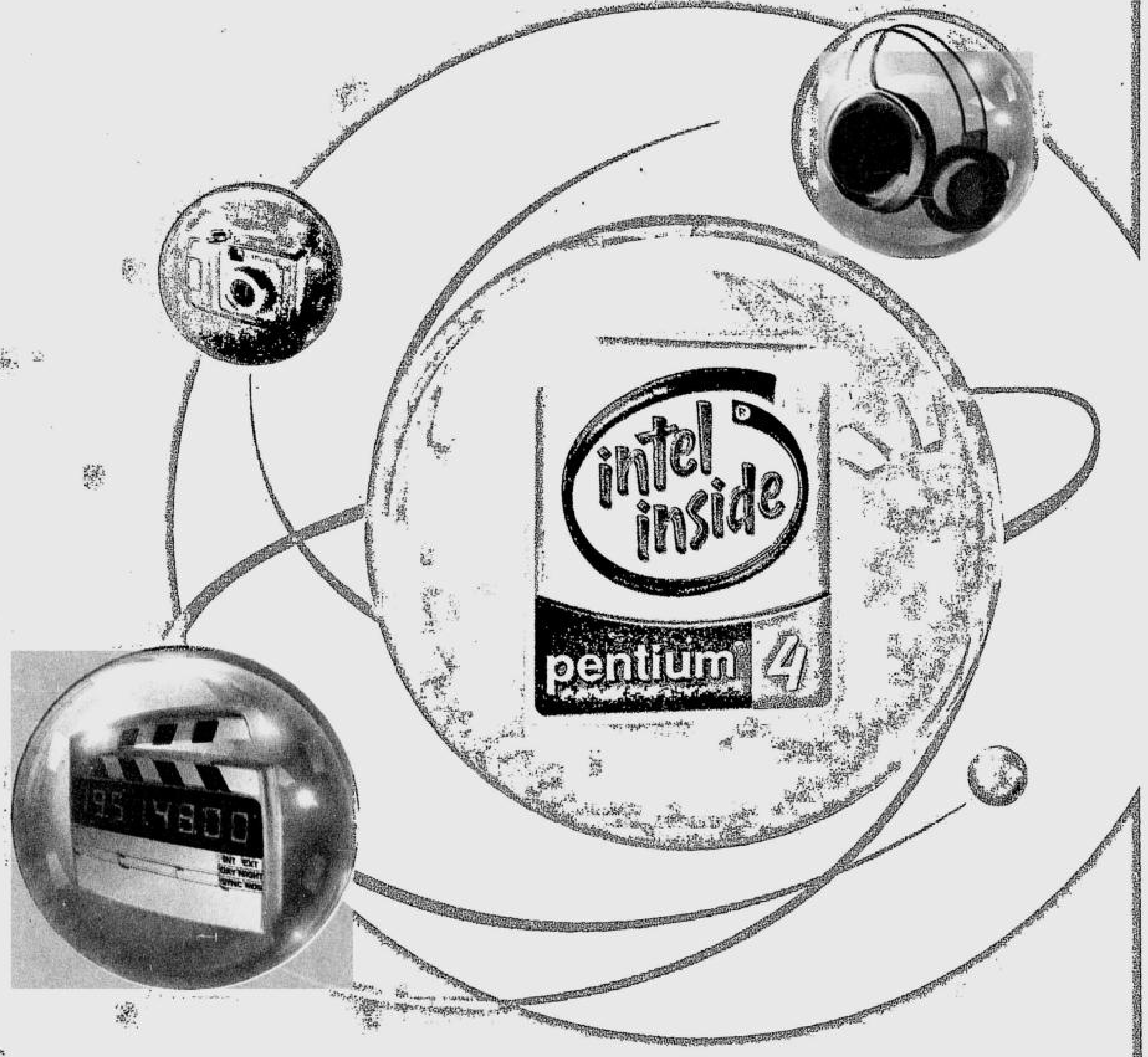

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Horror and anguish in 'Devil's Backbone'

By Anthony Breznican

LOS ANGELES—"What is a ghost?"

The first words spoken in the Spanish-language thriller "The Devil's Backbone" pose what seems like an obvious question that is not easily answered.

A murky child ghost walks the halls of the rural Santa Lucia School, a shelter for boys orphaned by the still raging Spanish Civil War, but residents soon find the real menace haunting them is made of flesh and blood.

"What is a ghost? A tragedy condemned to repeat itself?" asks the school's father figure, Professor Casares (Federico Luppi, star of 1997's "Men with Guns.") "Something dead which seems to be still alive?"

Spirit

He may be talking about the spirit, which manifests itself in gloomy hallways as the decomposing body of a murdered little boy, but the words also describe the school's caretaker, Jacinto.

Jacinto (Eduardo Noriega, star of Alejandro Amenabar's 1997 thriller "Open Your Eyes") was raised at the orphanage himself and blames the school for his friendless, empty childhood. Disliked by his fellow orphans as a boy, he uses his physical might as a man to bully the children and manipulate administrators.

Casares, whose empathy is both his strength and weakness, still feels sorry for the loveless boy, and doesn't realize until too late that he harbors a sociopath.

Life at the orphanage begins to unravel when 10-year-old Carlos (newcomer Fernando Tielve) is left there after losing his father.

The curious boy soon encounters the ghost, whom the other boys refer to as "the one who sighs," and hears it whisper, "Kill you all . . . kill you all . . ."

But is this a threat or a warning?

Director and co-writer Guillermo del Toro, who made the 1993 revisionist vampire drama "Cronos" and the 1997 bug-attack thriller "Mimic," fills "The Devil's Backbone" with a disturbing mix of horror and anguish.

No cheap scares

Like Amenabar's "The Others" this year, another superior horror thriller, there are no cheap scares and the terror is ominous.

The pallid face of "the one who sighs" often flashes out of total darkness, and cinematographer Guillermo Navarro expertly plays with menacing shadows on the school's imposing stone walls.

Del Toro is comfortable letting silence and darkness dominate the frightening moments, and unlike substandard horror films that treat murder as a punchline, the deaths here are tragic, real and heartbreaking.

His imagery is often as surreal and haunting as the ghost, and he creates poetry from the silence. In one scene, a bomb falls from an airplane and lands in the schoolyard in front of one of the orphans.

It does not explode and becomes a mystery to the children as it is allowed to remain jutting from the ground.

Is it a dud? Should it be defused? Why will no one remove it?

The bomb serves as a metaphor for Jacinto himself.

"The Devil's Backbone," a Sony Pictures Classics release, runs 106 minutes. *AP*

MMFF 2001 bares preliminary entries

THERE are 16 preliminary entries entered in the forthcoming Metro Manila Film Festival:

FLT Int'l—"Burles King Daw, O" (comedy/drama); MMG Films—"Bro-Kahit Saan Engkwentro" (action/drama); Sunlight Films—"Talamak" (action); Teamwork Productions—"Bugnoy" (drama); Regal Entertainment—"Bahay Ni Lola" (horror); Good Harvest Productions—"Hubog" (suspense);

MAQ Films—"Yamashita" (adventure); Manhattan Asia Films—"Mga Batang Lansangan Ngayon" (children's fantasy drama); Maverick Films—"Hesusmaryosep,4 Fathers" (comedy); Hinabing Pangarap Inc. "Batang Westside" (drama); E-Corp Films—"Hindi Kita Ma-Reach" (action);

ATB-4—"Sapagkat Kami Ay Tao Lamang" (drama); Star Cinema Productions—"Bagong Buwan" (social drama); Viva Films—"Tatarin" (drama); Neo Films—"Mahal Kita, Final Answer" (action/comedy) and Jolo Films—"Walang Iwanan . . . Peksman" (comedy/action).

FROM left, front row, Marilyn Martinez, Mandy Navasero, Louie Gaerlan, Jorge Pineda, Louie Casas and Jimmy Morelos. From left, back row, Val Velasco, Eddie Veneracion, Ramon Y. Sy, Dick Garcia, Nonong Bacani, Oscar Ramirez, Ramoncito Fernandez, Nonoy Salumbides and Rolly Arquillera.

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MERCHANTS BANK BOARD OF DIRECTORS. From left, Cesar Valenzuela, Vic Macalincag, Luis Gaerlan (Chairman), Teddy Manapat, Dr. Ananias Cornejo, Tertuliano Tolentino and Serge Esguerra. Not in the picture are Gonzalo Go and Dominador Aganon.

Merchants Bank marks silver anniversary

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

NOV. 5, 2001 proved to be an evening to remember as Merchants Bank commemorated 25 years of thrift banking with a silver anniversary celebration at the Palm Grove restaurant at Rockwell. On hand to greet the bank's well-wishers were Chairman of the Board of Directors, Luis I. Gaerlan Jr., my former boss at Bank of America NT and SA Manila branch from 1965 to 1977.

Stirring speech

The event was highlighted by a stirring speech by no less than Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura.He praised Merchants Bank for having endured several crises that hit the banking industry. He cautioned banks to increase their capital in preparation for hard times ahead.

Noteworthy in the Governor's address was his advice to all bankers: "I encourage banks to go into micro-financing."

Buenaventura observed that the members of marginalized sector of society were good payers of loans and rarely reneged on their obligations. This type of retail lending may very well spur growth on a micro economic scale. With the Governor was Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes.

Evening gala

The special evening gala turned into a gathering of a veritable who's-who in the banking industry. Sharing cocktails and small talk were megabanker Ramon Sy, president of International Exchange Bank;. MetroBank's president, Tony Abacan; Santiago Cua Jr., senior executive vice president of Philippine National Bank; Serge Esguerra, chief operating officer of the Finman Group of Companies which counts Merchants Bank as its satellite member;

Remy Macalincag, president of Development Bank of the Philippines; Rolando Geronimo, executive vice president of DBP; Singaporean Chua Teng Hui, president of United Overseas Bank; Nonong Bacani, executive vice president of Philtrust Bank; Boy Cruz, executive vice president of Land Bank of the Philippines; Doy Casuela, former president of Land Bank, and Bill Go, former president of China Trust Banks;

Chairman

Tito Santos, executive vice president of RCBC and current chairman of Bancnet Inc.; Marilyn F. Suarez, officer-in-charge of Merchants Bank; Jimmy Panganiban, executive vice president of RCBC.

Isabelita "Belits" Papa, executive vice president of United Overseas Bank, Phils. Inc.; Vangie Escubillo, president of Anchor Savings Bank; former president of Asian Bank, Edward Go; former Undersecretary of Finance, Flor Tarriela, now a director of PNB; Shigeru Noma and Kasuya Endo, president and executive vice president of Nippon Life Philippines; Shayne Mcnally, president of CMG Phils.; Rafael G. Uyguanco, executive vice president of Prudential Life; Ace Fernandez, president of Decision Systems Inc.; Francis Laurel, president of YKK Phils.; Manolo Fernando, treasury head of Meralco; and Lita Goño, president of the Salary Deduction Assistance Association.

GAERLAN and Metrobank president Tony Abacan.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura (right) congratulates Gaerlan.

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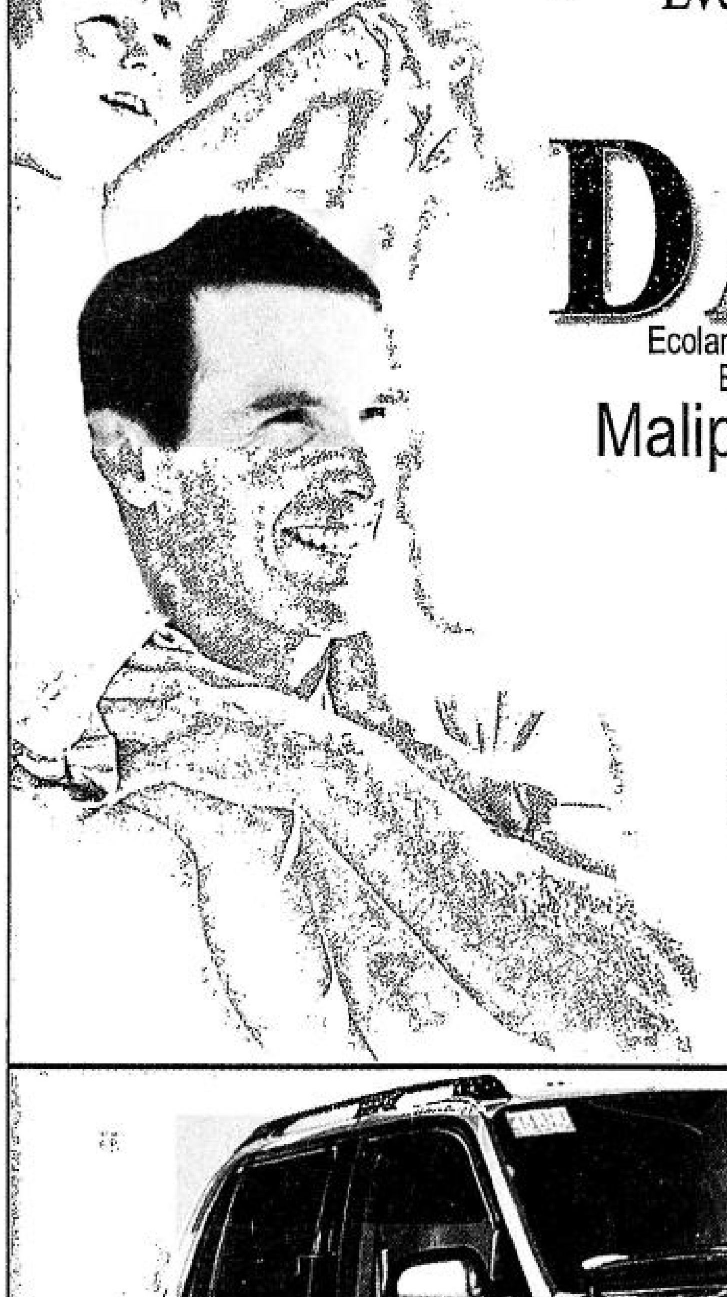

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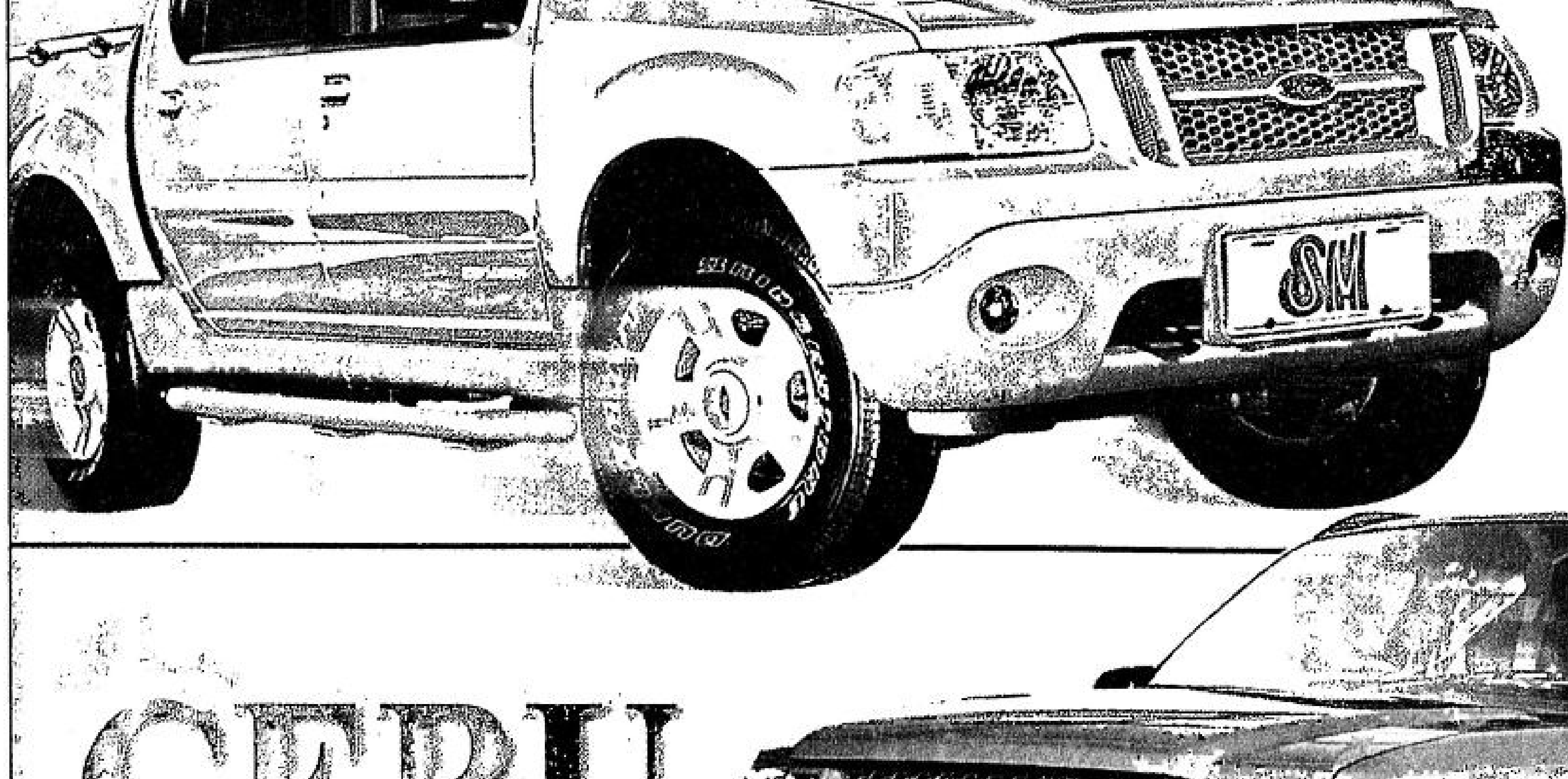

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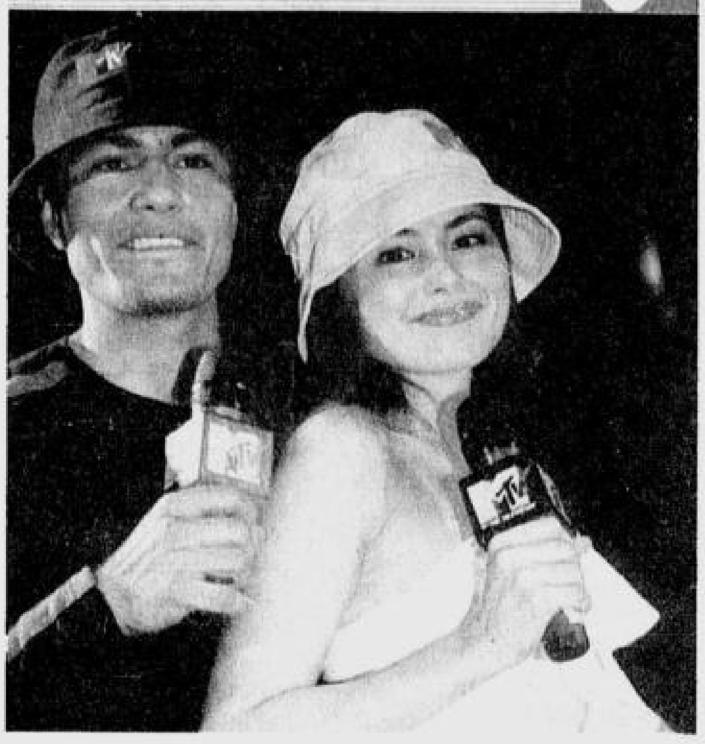
Saturday **SPECIAL**

MTV Philippines has two new VJs

BY JOCELYN VALLE



RAMSAY AND SHIER. They not only looked good together, they sounded great as well.

"NOW, I'm really nervous," quipped model Derek Ramsay after being proclaimed as one of the winners of MTV Philippines' VJ Hunt 2001 on Nov. 17 at the SM Megamall Megastrip. His co-victor, colleague Anna Shier, coolly thanked the organizers, looking every inch like VJs Donita Rose and Belinda Panelo.

Magna cum laude

At the onset of the finals' night, though, nobody thought that Derek (who took up BS marketing and electrical engineering in England and co-hosts the campus beauty contest portion on "Eat Bulaga") and Anna (a magna cum laude graduate from the University of Minnesota and a former Miss Philippines-Minnesota) were sure bets.

After all, the other eight finalists were just like them: lookers who had impressive educational and/or professional backgrounds:

Mich Astudillo is a computer science graduate from the Ateneo de Davao (where fellow finalist Carlos Ramos used to study, too) but works as a first aid and CPR instructor and as a ramp and commercial model.

Jansen Cunanan has a degree in physical therapy from St. Jude College, Manila and used to be a DJ for Magic 89.9 dwTM.

Charms Espina is a third year student at De la Salle University while Monique del Mar is a former Hong Kong-based model for TV and print ads who's appeared on local dramas and sitcoms. Mary Ann Sansano also acts, models and hosts events.

Exchange student

Mickey Randall likewise promotes products on local TV and print media. Back in Canada, where he grew up, however, he was aiming to become a physiotherapist. Louie Tortuya, on the other hand, is an exchange student from UCLA who studies at UP Diliman, and hopes to be a lawyer.

But as the contest proper progressed, it was clear that Anna and Derek met all the criteria for a future VJ: On-camera presence—30 percent, ad-lib skills—15 percent, bilingual communications—20 percent, personality—20 percent, music knowledge—10 percent and MTV factor—5 percent.

> Lady Luck was clearly on the side of Derek and Anna as they found perfect teammates in each other

To facilitate a comprehensive test on hosting, the organizers grouped the 10 hopefuls into five pairs (who would each open a segment, introduce a performing act and then answer a question by an assigned member of the board of judges).

Lady Luck was clearly on the side of Derek and Anna as they found perfect teammates in each other. They didn't only look good together, they sounded great as well.

Anna evinced a resemblance to fresh-faced Donita in the competition's publicity shots, but in person, she is thankfully her own person. Her voice is sweet but, at the same time, commanding.

Neutral accent

Though Derek is half British, he has a neutral accent (or maybe he just has the good sense of adjusting to the country he's currently residing in). His voice is a bit high-pitched but he's able to control it, thus avoiding irritating the listener.

They were able to hold the interest of the hard-to-please audience (we sympathize with the contestants and guest-performers alike who tried in vain to nudge the crowd to "P-A-R-T-Y!") by being themselves, smart and confident.

As they were mounting the stage for their turn to play VJs, Anna and Derek first acknowledged the band Imago, who had just rendered two songs, and was interviewed by Pair No. 3, Charms and Carlos.

They didn't emerge from the backstage like some hyperenergetic kids yelling to the crowd to be just like them (a turn-off for Filipinos, we've observed). Even better, they were unlike some finalists who were only shouting words but not feeling them.

Anna and Derek had a routine, which they obviously rehearsed backstage while waiting for

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H I L F I G E R

CAMILLE Prats (left) plays Barrios' love interest.

Three generations of stars assembled in Yamashita movie

By Remy M. Umerez

MORE than the spectacular special effects, the Regal movie "Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure" offers, director Chito Roño is proud of his cast. He has assembled a set of actors from three generations. He is particularly pleased tha the was able to convince Armando Goyena, a matinee idol during the '50s to stage a comeback.

Love team

Goyena was a popular actor at LVN Pictures and, together with Tessie Quintana, he formed a love team moviegoers swooned over. Even before Dolphy put on a dress in "Jack 'N' Jill" Goyena doubled as a woman in the romantic comedy "Tia Loleng" to win the heart of the woman he loves.

When color pictures made their way to local screen, Goyena appeared in "Hawayana," which was partly shot in Eastman color. He was a handsome prince in the costume movie "Prinsipe Tiñoso."

Other leading ladies who were frequently paired opposite the dashing Armando included Evelyn Villar, Mila del Sol and Lilia Dizon (mother of Christopher de Leon).

Goyena is the father of Maritess and Tina Revilla both of whom joined show business. They were the original endorsers of a beauty soap.

He quit the movies in the late '50s to concentrate on business to support his large family.

Cameo appearance

He is joined in "Yamashita" by his only son Johnny (husband of singer Janet Basco) who makes a carneo appearance. Their scenes were shot in California along with former model beauty queen Bambi Arambulo, longtime San Francisco resident.

Roño is all praises for the professionalism that the entire cast, particularly Goyena, displayed—this, despite his advanced age and a heart bypass.

"The action in this movie is all real unlike in 'Spirit Warriors' where every fight scene was computer generated. It was physically exhausting but Goyena didn't complain. Even in the most grueling scenes, which involved running and being gunned down *wala akong reklamong narinig sa kanya.* He worked as hard as his junior co-stars," Roño beams.

Scriptwriter Roy Iglesias believes that Goyena is perfect for the role of the grandfather of Danilo (Barrios) who holds the key to the hidden treasure of Yamashita, the World War II Japanese general known as the Tiger of Malaya. He provides the heart and the drama of the popular story.

Ultimate screen villain

The '50s also witnessed the birth of the ultimate screen villain in the person of Vic Diaz, whom Roño persuaded to make a comeback in the recently shown "La Vida Rosa." In "Yamashita," Diaz plays the Japanese officer who tortures Goyena and hounds him long after the war is over.

The young Goyena is essayed by Carlo Muñoz (of "Hello Billy" fame) while Japanese actor Tatsuya Matsui is the young Vic Diaz.

The '80s and the '90s are represented by Albert Martinez and Rustom Padilla. Danilo Barrios and Camille Prats lead the stars of the new millennium together with Janus del Prado, Mico Palanca, Bearwin Meilly, Ethan Javier and Carlo Muñoz.

"*Cariñoso pero tuso*" is how talented actor Albert Martinez describes his role of a tireless treasure hunter. On the other hand, Rustom feels like an anime character, his long hair and all-black outfit enhancing his handsome face and muscled physique.

According to Roño, Barrios' has improved since his debut in last year's "Spirit Warriors." He also notes that appearing in soap operas has given his ward greater self-confidence. In "Yamashita," Danilo portrays a leader of sorts of young treasure hunters, with Camille Prats as his love interest.

Janus del Prado plays Goyena's ill-fated younger brother, providing some stirring moments in the movie.

"Yamashita: The Tiger's Treasure" is a brainchild of Roselle Monteverde-Teo who believes in giving the public the best in terms of star, story and production values.

THE MEN OF "YAMASHITA." Barrios, Armando Goyena, Albert Martinez and Rustom Padilla.

ROÑO (left) feels his ward, Danilo Barrios, has gained self-confidence.

Respect the soul–and the body

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WHEN a person jumps off a building or hangs himself by a rope, this is a serious sign that he lacks the wisdom that we require to live peacefully in this world. When we are attacked by problems, here are some basic things we should understand and never forget:

Existence

1. The imperishable person or self inhabits the external material body and destroying the body will not end the existence of the individual.

2. The material body is the house not only for the spirit- soul but also for the Supersoul or Supreme Lord within the heart of each person. Smashing the body or poisoning it is a sacrilegious act against the temple of the Lord. In other words, one must maintain respect not only for the soul inside the body, but also for the Supersoul including His residence.

3. Everything in this world is owned by the Supreme Lord. We are asked to be responsible caretakers of the things that come under our jurisdiction. We are not the creators of the material body; therefore we also have no right to destroy it.

4. The material mind (the subtle physical body of the person) dictates to us all sorts of speculations and ideas—"You have no reason to live. Nobody loves you. You're a failure. It is better to die."

Thoughts

Do not listen to the mind's dictation. You are not the mind nor are you the thoughts proposed by the mind. Actual facts are given by scriptures, the saints and the Lord.

You have a purpose for living. The goal of human life is to achieve self-realization and re-establish our loving relationship with the Supreme Lord. He loves you unconditionally. Even if everyone else rejects you, you have the Supreme Lord as your Best Friend and Beloved.

You can use your material body to achieve the real happiness of loving and being loved by God. If you destroy your material body, you will suffer very painful consequences for committing such an abominable and sinful act.

5. This material world is full of dualities—heat and cold, happiness and distress, pain and pleasure, etc. Problems come and go. What do you do when you are attacked by problems and pain? You can focus on your problems and listen to your mind saying, "There is no hope, no answer, no solution." You can meditate on your troubles and become more and more miserable.

Troubles

Or, you can meditate on the Supreme Lord and take shelter in Him. You can choose to be either problem-conscious or God-conscious. When you choose to face the Supreme Lord, your back will be turned to your troubles. The problems will still be there but they won't overwhelm you or torment you. Floods, wars, tragedies, accidents, and economic difficulties will come, but they won't touch or affect us.

When the attacks and difficulties come, we should simply turn to the Lord and experience the peacefulness of His loving care and protection. When we have true shelter, we will not feel the cold and pain of being exposed to the harsh elements.

When we meditate on God, we become untouched by the anxieties of this world just as a lotus flower is untouched because it rises above the impurities of the lake.

We have a reason and purpose to exist. If we understand our eternal identity as spirit souls, we will cling to our eternal relationship with the Supreme. With wisdom, there is clarity of vision and hope. With the Supreme Lord, there is refuge and protection from all dangers.

MTV Philippines has two new VJs

(From page G1)

their turn. They dared each other to impersonate Britney Spears. Anna gladly sang and danced like the teenage pop star. Derek "tricked" her as he introduced rapper D-coy instead.

Second number

After D-coy's second number (with a group of rappers called Mad Poets), Derek and Anna competently interviewed the performers. When judge Tim Yap asked Anna what she would do if she found out that she was pregnant while pursuing a career as a VJ and she declared that she wouldn't hide it, the crowd roared in approval.

The audience's reception was likewise strong when Derek told them what he would do if, as Yap made him imagine, his girlfriend asked him to choose between her and VJ work. "She wouldn't be loving me if she doesn't want me to do what I want to do," he said.

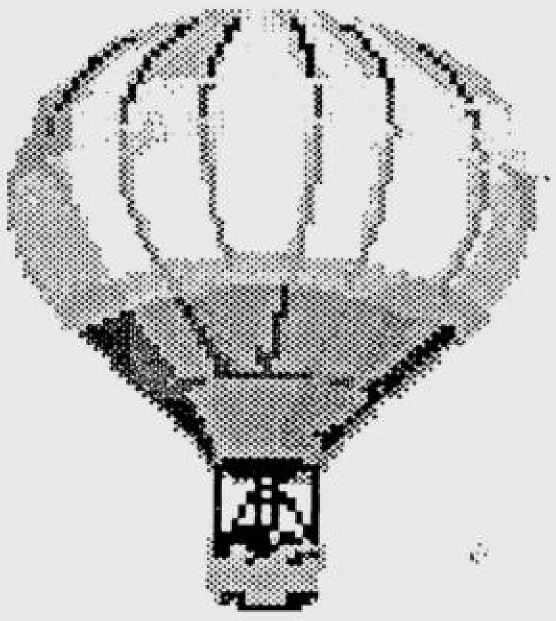
When the final, and loveliest, pair failed to deliver, it was clear who would be working next for MTV Philippines—especially when Derek and Anna copped the "Freshest Faces" special award, and Anna was tapped as one of the four "Standout Girls" of the evening (the others were from the audience).

Initially, it was only on Anna's lucky head where Francis Lumen, MTV Philippines' managing director, put the MTV hat. After a while, he came back to center stage with another MTV hat in hand, and it landed on Derek's head this time.

THE MTV VJ finalists.

DEREK (left) and Anna interview hip-hop group D-coy.

VJ Belinda Panelo (left), Sarah Meier and VJ KC Montero.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Ryan Cayabyab's causes keep him creating new works

RYAN Cayabyab was never someone to be daunted by great challenges. He has had a long and colorful career as a musician—as singer, songwriter, composer, teacher—and yet he is showing no signs of slowing down.

Video clips

Not that we expect him to. Watching him in video clips from two decades ago, accompanying the esteemed Pilita Corrales, we realize that Ryan has never stopped creating.

Only recently, Ryan flew to Athens, Greece, to receive an award from the Onassis Foundation's competition for original music composition for dance. The wonder is not in the award, but in the humility he never seems to lose, and in the strength he always seems to find.

Ryan is following quite a hectic schedule these days. As soon as he returns from Athens, he is set to rehearse with an all-star cast of performers for his yearly Bantay Bata 163 concert.

For the Christmas concert, entitled "Children, Peace and Hope," he will conduct a 40-piece orchestra as well as play the piano. He is also the show's musical director.

The one-night-only dinner-concert is scheduled at the Meralco Theater on Dec. 9, Sunday at 7 p.m.

Ryan laments the fact that children are often regarded as helpless and unable to think for themselves. "It is unfortunate that the cycle of abuse will not be stopped completely," he says. "However, with an organization like Bantay Bata 163, and its effective media arm, child abuse is brought to light in the homes that may be candidates for such acts."

Best facilities

Perhaps, it is Ryan's causes that keep him creating new works. He is also involved in organizing and managing a new philharmonic orchestra and choir named the San Miguel Philharmonic and the San Miguel Master Chorale. Through the Center for Excellence, Ryan is working towards "educating the poorest of the poor with the best facilities rivaling the top private schools in the land."

The project "aims to mold leaders (of industry, culture, education, etc.) and arm them with the confidence they need to battle the odds against them."

And Ryan has always been working for composers' and songwriters' rights. We all need our causes to keep us going, to find meaning in our lives. It is these causes that keep the music going for Ryan Cayabyab.

CAYABYAB (center) is particularly concerned about developing young musical talents through groups like the 14K in the 1980s (shown above), through Smokey Mountain in the '90s, and with the young students at UP and his music studio today.

'Scentsational' Season

This Christmas holiday, treat your family and friends to the wonderful world of luxury fragrances. Beat the mad rush and dazzle with these special, limited edition perfume gift sets from Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren and Lancôme. *The perfect gift has never looked or smelled better!*

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The latest scent from Giorgio Armani, Emporio Armani White for him and for her
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Get together this Christmas with the perfect companion to a modern lifestyle.

Emporio Armani She is a delicate oriental fragrance of cardamom, musk and cedar wood; caressing, intimate and familiar.

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Take home three bears for only P500 with every purchase of a Ralph Lauren fragrance. A portion of the proceeds shall be given to the Sisters of Mary Boystowns and Girlstowns.

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Polo Sport is an invigorating fresh and aromatic fragrance that gives one a rush of energy.

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Looking for a deep sensation of peace and serenity? Aromacalm's range of body treatments frees one's mind and relaxes the body. Perfect for women who wish for moments of true relaxation, Aromacalm's concentrated selected essential oils soothe and moisturize the skin, leaving it fresh, supple, and silky soft.

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Miracle

For the woman who embraces the sheer miracle of life. The newest fragrance of Lancôme, Miracle is for women who exude radiance and excitement. Women who, with a single caress, expression or smile, seem to change the world.

Other perfume gift sets not shown (Tresor, Aromatonic, Ô Oui and Mini Fragrances - Lancôme; Romance for Men Holiday 2001 Classics, Ralph 2001 Xmas Set 2 - Ralph Lauren; Acqua Di Gio pour Homme, Emporio Armani She - Giorgio Armani) are also available at all leading department stores.

Sam Mendes resigns from London theater post

By Jonathan Kent

LONDON—Oscar-winning director Sam Mendes said last week that he was quitting as artistic chief of the London theater to which he has lured some of Hollywood's top names.

Mendes, 35, whose Oscar was one of five won by the movie "American Beauty" last year, secured 100,000 pounds ($140,000) a year from movie mogul Steven Spielberg for the acclaimed Donmar Warehouse theater, where he was artistic director.

Naked Nicole

Mendes also persuaded Nicole Kidman to appear naked in a production of "The Blue Room" at the tiny theater three years ago and in recent weeks was in discussions with both Kidman and "Titanic" star Kate Winslet about possible productions there.

"It is time to hand the Donmar on to another generation," Mendes said in a statement after 10 years in the job.

"This is a hard but fitting decision to make, and we believe it is the right way to ensure the Donmar's ongoing development as a vibrant, influential theater," he said.

Successes

Mendes will leave the Donmar Warehouse at Christmas 2002.

He has presided over a string of successes at the Donmar Warehouse theater since he became artistic director in 1992.

Reuters

MENDES. Hard but fitting decision to make.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM DEC. 1 - DEC. 7

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	29	E! 31
	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:00 Mary D' Potter 9:00 Da Pilya en Da Pilot 10:00 Kakasa Ka Ba? 10:30 Sapul Kayo Dyan 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Auto Review 6:30 Uncut 7:00 Saturday Primetime Special 9:00 The Bodyguards 10:00 Explore with Mike 11:00 Auto Focus 11:30 Fox News	6:30 Wing Commander 7.00 Sailormoon Super S 7.30 Wheel of Fortune 8.00 Celebrity Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Eezy Dancing 10:30 Saturday Night Specials	5:30 Imbestigador 6:30 Korek na Korek Ka Dyan 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:00 Pinoy Blockbuster 11:00 Master Showman Presents	6:00 Star Trek 7:00 Special Unit II 8:00 Strange World 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse 11:00 PGMA	8.00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9.00 Kagat Ng Dilim 11:00 IBC Elorde	6:00 Digital Tour 6:30 G2 Living 7:00 Explorer 7:30 Early Edition 8:30 Gilmore Girls 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 12:00 MYX Sampler	3:00 Q Show Case 7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Celebrity Profile 9:00 E! News Special 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut 11:30 Extreme Close Up
	5.30 Sharon 7:00 Digimon 7:30 Wansapanataym 9.00 Pinoy Exposed 9:30 ABS-CBN Presents 11:30 Off The Record 12.00 The Weekend News	3:00 MBA 8:00 Street Legal 9:00 Sunday's Big Showdown 11:00 Business & Leisure 11:30 Fox News	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Price is Right 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 The Big Night 11:00 Sentinel	5:30 Partners Mel and Jay 7:00 Pokemon 7:30 Sinerama 9:30 Sunday Night Box Office 11:30 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Entertainment This Weekend 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Where in Time is Carmen San Diego 8:30 Kids Say the Darndest Thing 9:00 Sunday's Big Event 11:00 Sunday Report 11:30 Ugnayan	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:30 PBA Game 2 8:30 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:30 Sinemaks 11:30 El Shaddai	6:00 Starship Troopers 6:30 Rugrats 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Futurama 8:00 Bette 8:30 Veronica's Closet 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 Murder in Smalltown X 10:30 Twilight Zone 11:00 News Central	5:00 Quartermaster Window Shop 7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night Movies 11:00 Bikini Open	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 FYE! 8.00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! True Hollywood Story
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 8:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 9:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 10:00 FPJ Action Cinema 11:00 Headlines 11:30 The Correspondents	5:00 Metro TV 6:00 Value Vision 7:00 Sigaw 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Speed 11:00 Unlimited Diving	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 F 7:00 Mahha Go Go Go 7:30 Wheel Of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Touched By An Angel 9:30 On Air 10:00 The Big News 10:30 High Tide	6:00 Saksi 6:30 DragonballZ 7:00 Sorcerer Hunter 7:30 Korek na Korek Ka Dyan 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 GMA's Best 11:00 Front Page 11:30 I-Witness	5.30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Becker 7:30 Arliss 8:00 World's Most Amazing Videos 9:00 The X-Files 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment Tonight 11:00 Sex & The City	5:30 Viva Music Channel 6:30 Viva Box Office 8:30 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:30 The Weakest Link 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Good Take	6:00 Beat UK 7.00 Primetime Classics 7:30 The Nanny 8:00 Dark Angel 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Points of View 11:30 Jenny Jones 12:00 MYX Sampler	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7.00 In Focus 8:00 Mysteries and Scandals 8:30 Search Party 9:00 Fashion Emergency 9:30 E! News Daily 10:00 60 Minutes 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Talk Soup
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 8:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 9:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 10:00 Oka Tokat 10:30 Kabalikat 11:00 Headlines 11:30 Mission X	5:00 Value Vision 6:00 Fox News 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Pulsong Masa 11:00 Fox News	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 Dragon League 7:00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 E.R. 9:30 Urban Doktor 10:00 The Big News 10:30 FX The Series	6:00 Saksi 6:30 DragonballZ 7:00 Sorcerer Hunter 7:30 Korek na Korek Ka Dyan 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 Kool Ka Lang 10:00 Kasangga 11:00 Front Page 11:30 The Probe Team	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Ed 8:00 Ally McBeal 9.00 The Practice 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment Tonight 11:30 The Extremist	6:30 Viva Box Office 8:30 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:30 The Weakest Link 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Good Take	6:00 Later with Jools 7:00 Primetime Classics 7:30 Popular 8:30 The Others 9:30 Just Shoot Me 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Zine 12:00 MYX Sampler	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7.00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 Celebrity Homes 9:30 E! News Daily 10:00 David Letterman 11.00 Uncut 11:30 Extreme Close Up 12:00 Talk Soup
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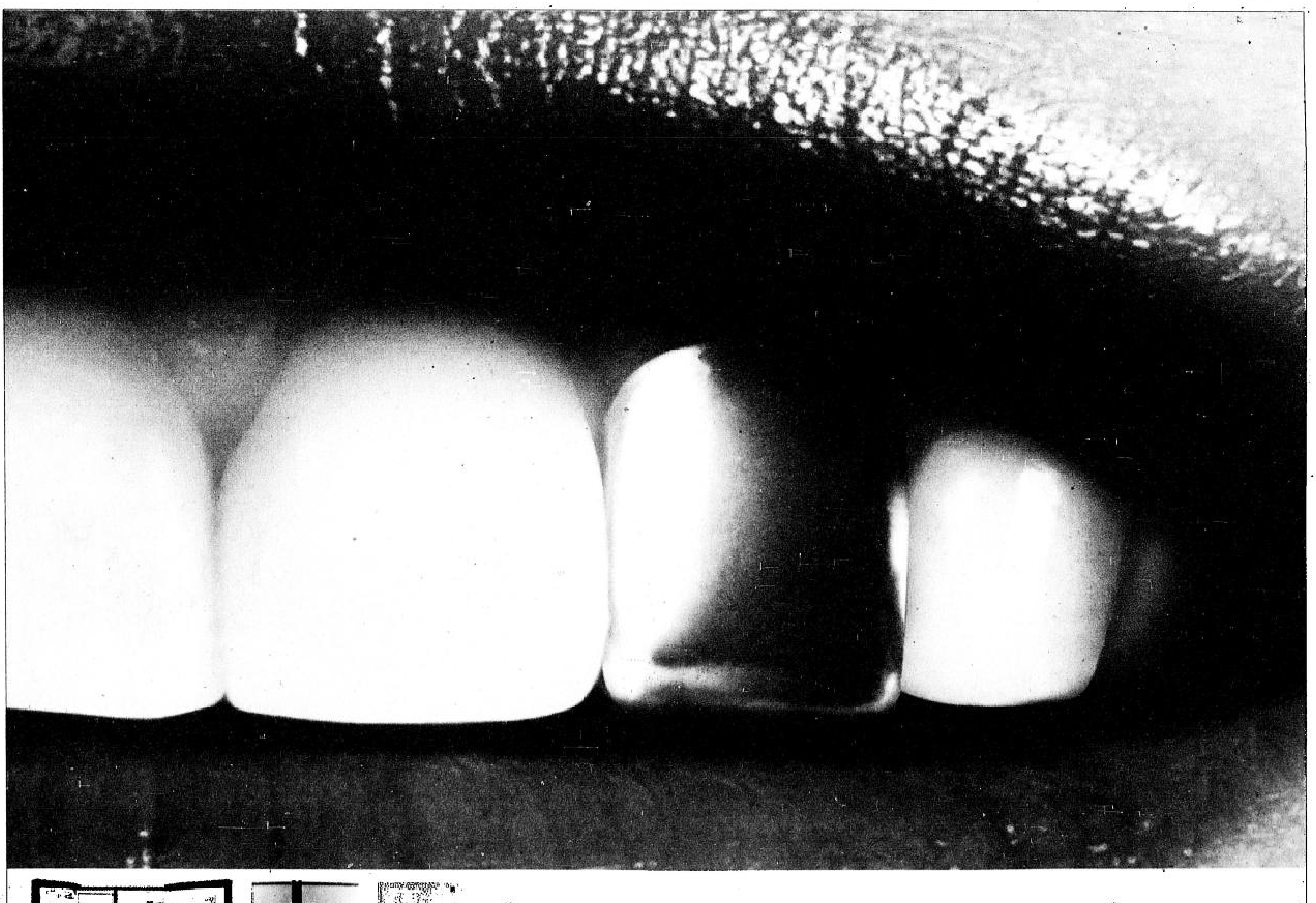
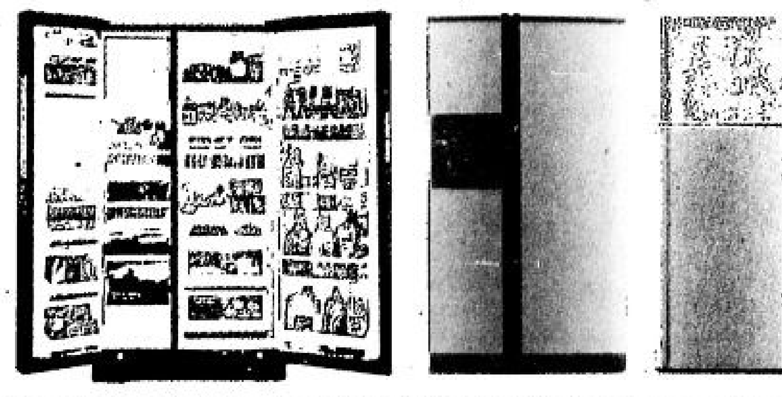
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 8:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 9:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 10:00 Attagirl 10:30 Maalaala Mo Kaya 11:00 Headlines 11:30 Pipol	4:00 Shop @ Home 5:00 Value Vision 6:00 Fox News 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Concert At The Park 11:00 Fora Medica	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 Shulato 7:00 Fancy Lala 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Guinnes World Records 9:30 The Exchange 10:00 The Big News 10:30 By Request	6:00 Saksi 6:30 DragonballZ 7:00 Sorcerer Hunter 7:30 Korek na Korek Ka Dyan 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 Daddy Di Do Du 10:00 Sa Dako Pa Roon 11:00 Front Page 11:30 Debate with Mare at Pare	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Clueless 8:00 Felicity 9:00 Once and Again 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 The Basketball Show 11:30 48 Hours	6:30 Viva Box Office 8:30 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:30 The Weakest Link 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Good Take	6:00 Behind The Music 7:00 Primetime Classics 7:30 Cineplex 23 9:30 Guide to Urban Living 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Travel Time 12:00 MYX Sampler	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 Celebrity Homes 9:30 E! News Daily 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut 11:30 Extreme Close Up 12:00 Talk Soup
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Game K N B? 8:30 Pangako sa 'Yo 9:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 9:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 10:00 Star Cinema Presents 11.00 Headlines 11:30 True Crime	4.00 MBA 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Patrol 117 11:00 Fox News	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 Lazer Patrol 7:00 Starcom 7:30 Wheel Of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Ispup 9:30 Trabaho Lang 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Friday Box Office	6:00 Saksi 6:30 DragonballZ 7:00 Sorcerer Hunter 7:30 Korek na Korek Ka Dyan 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 Bubble Gang 10:00 GMA Love Stories 11:00 Front Page 11:30 Emergency	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 That's Life 8:00 Dharma & Greg 8:30 Nikki 9:00 Largo 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 TV Greats on Friday	5:00 PBA Game 1 7:30 PBA Game 2 9:30 The Weakest Link 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 Ronda Trese 11:30 Good Take	6:00 Halo-Halo 7:00 Primetime CLassics 7:30 Survivor: Africa 8:30 Mortal Combat 9:30 Oh Grow Up! 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Jenny Jones 12:30 MYX Sampler	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 Mysteries & Scandals 8:30 Search Party 9:00 Fashion Emergency 9:30 E! News Daily 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On 12:00 Talk Soup





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'Band of Brothers' is a breathtaking, heartstopping miniseries

By Noelani Torre

"BAND of Brothers" is an eye-popping, breathtaking and heartstopping spectacle. (And that's from someone who doesn't exactly have hi-tech audio-visual equipment in the living room.) Co-executive produced by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg, this 10-hour HBO miniseries is based on the book by author and historian Stephen E. Ambrose. It tells the story of the men of the World War II US Army's E (Easy) Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.

We have only watched five of the 10 episodes so far, but we can say for sure that the $120 million spent on this production has definitely not gone to waste.

Intense experience

CNN Reviewer Paul Clinton writes that "Band" is a "profoundly intense experience that outshines any other World War II epic ever seen on television—or, for that matter, in any Hollywood feature film. There are two reasons [for this]: realism and time." "Band," unlike "Private Ryan," is based on the true story of a crack infantry unit which always managed to get sent to the front lines in the European theater of the Second World War.

Easy Company parachuted into Normandy on D-Day, fought in the Battle of the Bulge and at Bastogne, liberated the Dachau concentration camp and was the first to march into and capture Hitler's infamous Eagle's Nest at Berchtesgaden. They suffered 150 percent casualties.

These were real people in actual situations, and Hanks and Spielberg show them as they really were. There are no sanitized or romanticized scenes here, unlike in that other WWII "epic" "Pearl Harbor." In "Band" we are made to see the war as it really was, with its feats of heroism and acts of stupidity and inhumanity. The men were brave, true, but they also looted civilian homes, shot unarmed enemy soldiers, and were at times paralyzed with fear and indecision. Everything is told as it was, but always within context.

> The men were brave, true, but they also looted civilian homes, shot unarmed enemy soldiers, and were at times paralyzed with fear and indecision. Everything is told as it was, but always within context

Sympathy

By concentrating on one unit and retracing its history from basic training to the final days of the war, "Band of Brothers" evokes a feeling of sympathy from viewers. We fight and die with these men. We get to know them—their life stories, their fears—until they almost seem like friends. In the end, we are not mere observers of war but, through them, as close to being participants as we can ever be.

We are drawn not only by the story and the special effects but by a well-chosen and fantastic cast, composed mainly of unknown faces. (However, with the series' success on both sides of the Atlantic, they won't remain so for long.) Playing the central role of the company's respected leader, Lt. Dick Winters, is 30-year-old British Actor Damian Lewis. His quiet and intense portrayal of the stoic and introspective Winters is superb, and he's already attracted a lot of attention.

Familiar face

The one familiar face in the cast belongs to David Schwimmer ("Friends") who does a laughably accurate depiction of Capt. Herbert M. Sobel, the company's pompous first C.O. Other noteworthy appearances are those of Frank Johns Hughes as Bill Guarnere, Ron Livingston as Lt. Lewis Nixon, Scott Grimes as Donald Malarkey, Donnie Wahlberg as Carwood Lipton, and Kirk Acevedo as Joseph Toye. CNN's Clinton calls "Band" "a stunning achievement in casting."

Like "Saving Private Ryan," "Band" is characterized by vivid documentary realism. At times, the same jerky, hand-held camera technique is used. Along with the choppy edits and "brilliant use of sound and silence," this conveys the hellishness and terrifying unpredictability of war.

SPIELBERG AND HANKS. Co-executive producers of the $120 million spectacle.

Production design and construction costs make up a significant percentage of the series' huge budget. According to Entertainment Tonight, "by the third episode of shooting, the special effects department had used more pyrotechnics than were used in the entire production of 'Saving Private Ryan.' The wardrobe department hired the Corcoran boot company to manufacture 500 pairs of paratrooper jump boots to the original Army specifications and purchased or manufactured approximately 2,000 uniforms (German and American). All of the 1,200 civilian costumes were authentic vintage clothing and around 700 authentic weapons and almost 400 rubber prop weapons were used in production." That doesn't cover half of it. These guys were very, very thorough.

Important factor

Another important factor in the ultimate success of "Band of Brothers" is that it has so much time. Certainly a lot more can be explored in 10 hours than in two or three. The filmmakers have thus made use of this time and they came up with a World War II film that is in-depth, wide-ranging, and that, as Clinton puts it, "develops an equally large emotional arc, one with the punch of a howitzer."

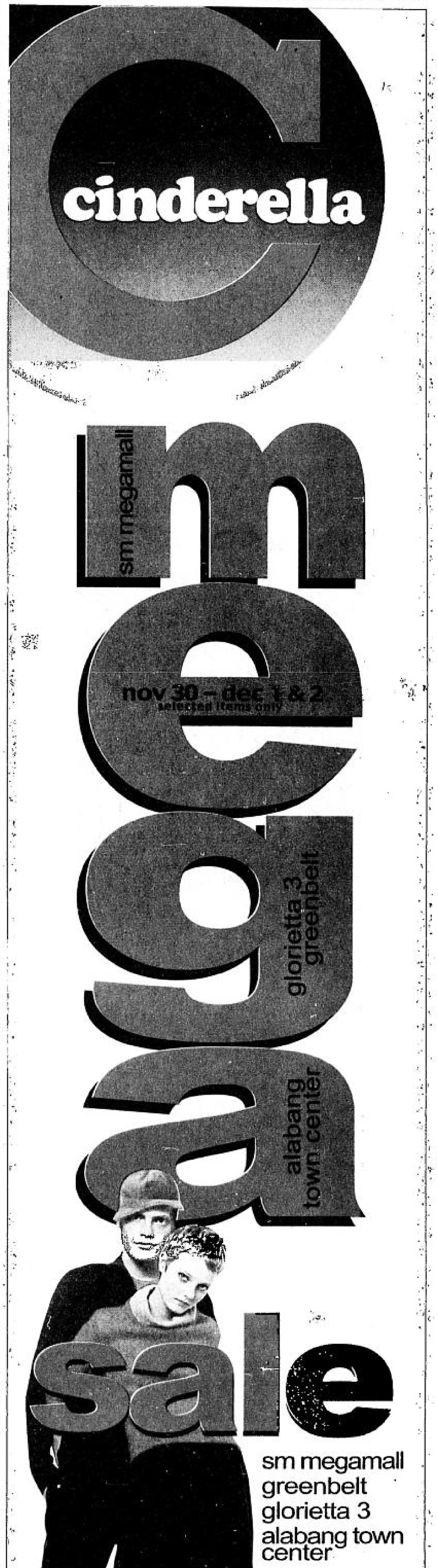
The first two episodes, "Currahee" (directed by Phil Alden Robinson) and "Day of Days" (directed by Richard Loncraine), chronicle the company's basic training at Camp Toccoa, their further training at England, and their fighting in Normandy after making the jump on D-Day. Here we are shown how harsh the men's physical training was and how big an S.O.B. their C.O., Lieutenant Sobel, was. Schwimmer captured the man's sadistic and vengeful nature perfectly. We also meet Lt. Dick Winters who, in direct contrast to Sobel, wins the men's trust and respect.

Dandelions

One of the most beautiful scenes we've seen so far occurs here when thousands of paratroopers make their jumps over Normandy and for a brief, silent moment their parachutes are suspended in the air like so many dandelions.

It is moments like this, "scenes of almost eerie beauty," as USA Today's Robert Bianco writes, that lend fresh horror to the graphic vio-

'BAND OF BROTHERS'/ P. G7



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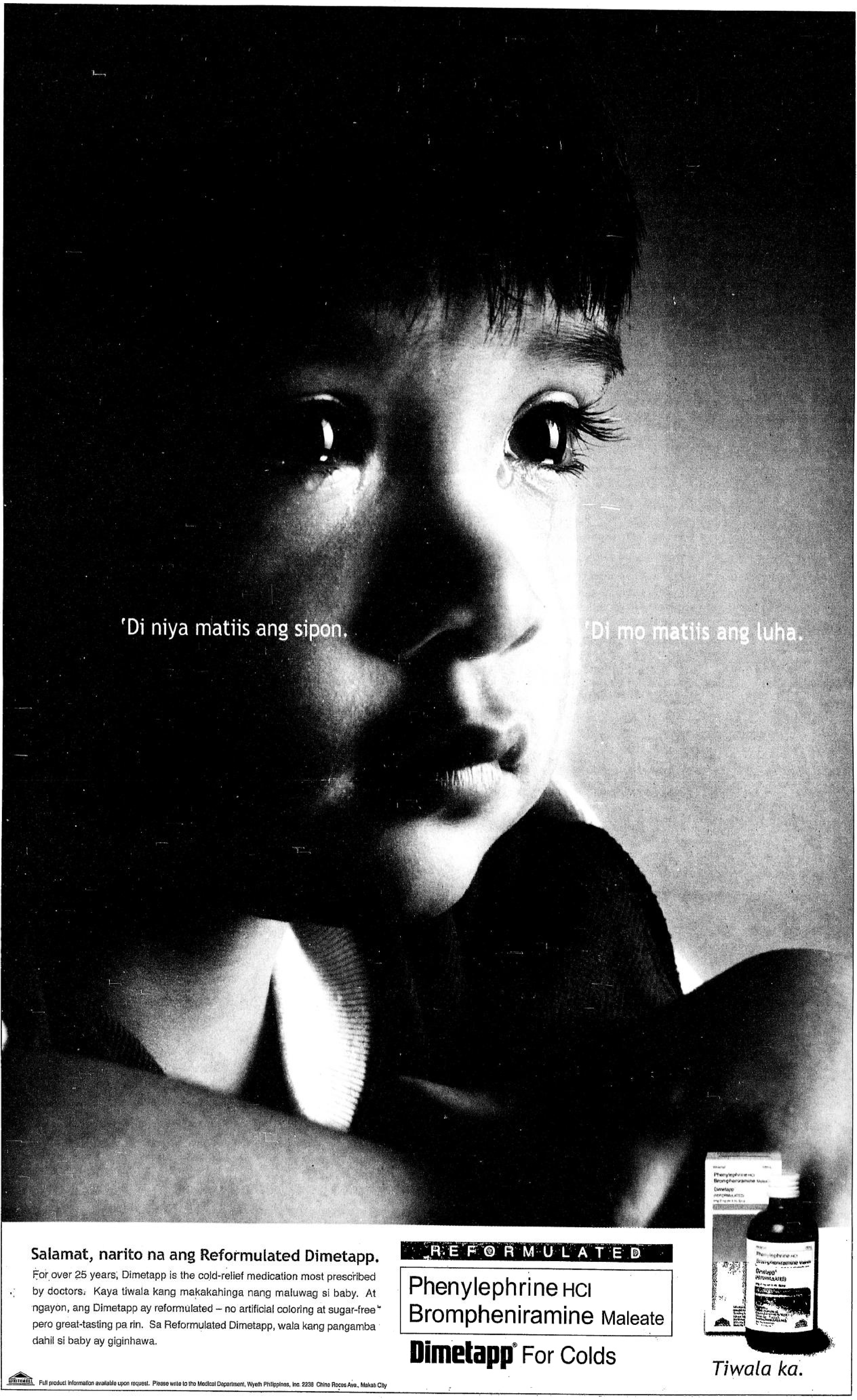
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STEVEN Walters and Rick Warden return the enemy's fire.

'Band of Brothers' . . .

(From page G5)

lence of war.

Episode 3, "Carentan" (directed by Michael Salomon), involves the company's taking of the French town of Carentan, but also revolves around one Pvt. Albert Blithe (Marc Warren) and his difficulties in trying to come to terms with the war. The scene with Blithe gazing abstractedly at the clouds is disturbing. Easy Company's firefight against the Germans, and their elation when they win is thrilling to watch.

Joyful town

Episode 4, "Replacements" (directed by David Nutter), is a bit lighter as the company liberates the laughing, joyful town of Eindhoven in Holland. The soldiers are not happy for long, however, as they go on to fight a superior German force in a nearby town and lose the men—boys, really—who have replaced some of their fallen comrades.

Episode 5, "Crossroads," is directed by Tom Hanks himself and is starker and darker. Winters has been promoted to captain and to Battalion Executive Officer, but he is dissatisfied with his largely administrative job. Also, he is haunted by the memory of a young German soldier whom he killed at the beginning of the episode.

The good war

These are all good, meaty stuff that one can chew on long after the one-hour episode is over. We, of course, can't wait to see the rest of the episodes (Tom Hanks' son, Colin Hanks, will be in the eighth episode) and thus to satisfy this thirst we seem to have developed for knowing what it was really like fighting "the good war."

WAHLBERG as Carwood Lipton.

"Band of Brothers" is an epic in the truest sense of the word, due not only to the filmmakers' efforts but most of all to the men, the heroes, who, with their courage, made everything else possible.

"Band of Brothers" airs on HBO Tuesdays at 9 p.m.

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All our scientists know very well that their American colleagues have established the amazing slimming action of Hydoxicitric acid. Their recent discoveries prove indisputably that this fruit acid increases thermogenesis, inhibits lipogenesis and naturally reduces appetite. Not only, you don't store new fat, but you also burn the stored fat you hold in reserve, even if it has been there for several years.

You will lose weight almost inspite of yourself

This extraordinary fruit acid (sold under the name "Mag Tab" that you can order right now for a free trial*) is a formidable fat-devouring acid which naturally reduces your appetite and helps you slim down confidently, knowing that you will lose weight without hunger or fatigue.

Tests conducted on 11 cases and 2 exceptional cases: NO FAILURES

A test was carried out on men and women of all ages who needed to lose 5 to 25 kilos in 30 days. Success in 99.8% of cases. The most amazing aspect is that 6 months later none of them have taken on new weight.

Even people who had never lost weight before did this time. Even those who thought their case was hopeless and believed in nothing any more lost their excess weight.

Even better, André, 40, 1.84 m, 146 kgs, and Gisele, 32, 1.62 m, 95 kgs are two special cases. For 10 years they had tried all sorts of experiments. For 10 years they could not lose more than 3 kilos per month. Suddenly, this simple experiment started helping them to lose weight. They lost up to 25 kilos a month until 2 months later they were at their ideal normal weight for the first time in their lives.

Visible results right away

All you have to do is take two tablets three times a day 15 minutes before each meal. While changing nothing in your eating habits, without hunger or fatigue, you will slim down gradually and steadily by 500 g to 1.2 kg per day the first week. Then you will lose between 2.8 and 5 kgs per week to quickly reach your ideal weight. The results will be visible in the first few days. You will see very quickly that your body is becoming slimmer and slimmer until it reaches its ideal shape. Then, with the Hydroxicitric acid acting directly on the "absorption/combustion" balance of your body fat, your weight will remain steady with no new weight gain.

The trial is totally free

All you have to do is check the number of kilos you wish to lose on the coupon opposite and mail it today. You will receive together with your order a complimentary free trial cure. You will be able to see, free of charge, the results on yourself and without the slightest risk and lose weight immediately.

Use the entire trial package, you owe us nothing, not now, not later.

If for any reason you don't immediately start losing weight, just return to us your unopened treatment and receive a full refund as quickly as possible. Of course, we wouldn't take the risk of disappointing you if we weren't practically certain that this free trial would prove to you the amazing effectiveness of "Mag Tab".

There is no reason that what works for thousands of others should not work for you. But hurry! Right now, we have only 300 trial packages available. More are expected to come in from abroad in a month only. Write us today to make sure you will be served without delay.

GIFT
If you reply within 5 days, you'll receive an additional bonus a very specially selected, "jewelry" gift. This thank you present will be yours no matter what will be your decision regarding the "Mag Tab" cure.

[illegible]

M.S.I.C. Unit 303 Munro Bldg.
612 Pinatubo St. Mand. City 1550 M.M.

GOOD FOR ONE
100% FREE TRIAL
Cut out and return to:
M.S.I.C., Room 303 Munro Bldg.,
612 Pinatubo St. Mand. City, 1550 M.M.

YES, for your free trial offer, with no obligation to buy interests me. I will receive a free trial treatment that I may use entirely while owing you nothing. If, after my free trial, I am not 100% satisfied, I will return the remaining unopened full cure within 15 days by registered mail. You will then refund me, immediately and fully, the cost of my remaining treatment, no questions asked.

This above being understood, I choose the following formula:

☐ 1502 (loss of 8 to 15 kgs.)
Free trial treatment + DOUBLE treatment of "Mag Tab" at the amazing price of P2,450 (a P450 savings) + P55 forwarding charges = P2,505

☐ 1501 (loss of 4 to 7 kgs.)
Free trial treatment + STANDARD treatment of "Mag Tab" at the amazing price of P1,450 + P 55 forwarding charges = P1,505

☐ 1503 (loss of 15 to 20 kgs.)
Free trial treatment + TRIPLE treatment of "Mag Tab" at the amazing price of P3,150 (a P1,200 savings) + P55 forwarding charges = P3,205

☐ 1504 (loss of more than 20 kgs.)
Free trial treatment + DRASTIC treatment of "Mag Tab" at the amazing price of P3,650 (a P2,150 savings) + P55 forwarding charges = P3,705

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Microsoft Philippines recently launched Windows XP, the latest version of the world's most popular operating system. The product debut was celebrated with the three-day Windows XP Expo, a corporate launch, and an extreme rain party, all held at the Greenbelt center in Makati City.

The launch activities gave guests first-hand previews on the capabilities of the new Windows. Business executives Mon Isberto of Smart, Raul Dimayuga of BPI, Jun San Juan of Philamlife, Edwin Soliman of Globe and Joey Limhap of PLDT demonstrated the different features of Windows XP during the corporate launch with industry stalwarts, Compaq country manager Nilo Cruz and Intel country manager Ricky Banaag.

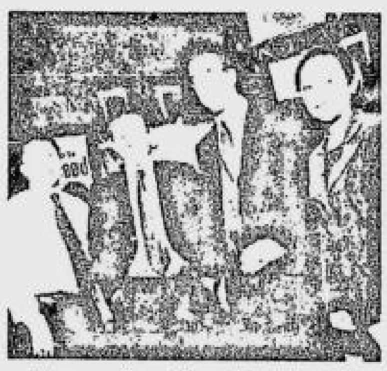
www.xtremeparty.com.ph, the Windows XP launch party, capped the three-day Manila launch activities. Music, prizes and rain literally poured that night as singer Ana Fegi, Pido With Take One and deejay Nicky Jurado entertained the crowd.

Windows XP is the newest and most powerful addition to Microsoft's line of operating systems software. It boasts of better stability, faster performance, and increased security as built on Windows 2000. Windows XP comes in the Professional and Home Editions. Both versions feature the same strengths, yet are tailored to the individual user's requirements with a slew of great features and functions - all showcased in a cleaner, sleeker, user-friendlier design. Windows XP is touted to revolutionize the way we work and use the Internet. The Windows XP launch activities were sponsored by Compaq, PLDT-DSL, Intel, INQ7, Hewlett-Packard, Computerworld and Infochat.

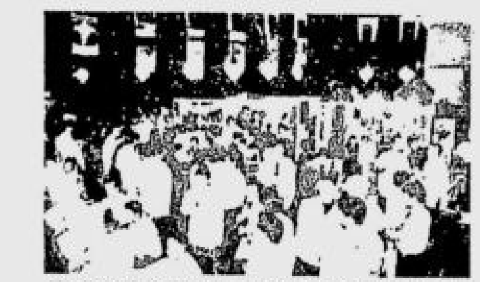
Microsoft launches Windows XP in Manila

The multitude, all curious about Windows XP, line up to witness the main launch.

Armed with water pistols and geared up in raincoats, party revelers celebrate the Xtreme Party organized by Microsoft as part of the activities that launched Windows XP.



TV personality and journalist Teddy Boy Locsin (second from left) checks out Windows XP. With him are (L - R) Noel San Agustin, manager for Premier Support Services, Mark Phibbs and Ria Anicete, Channels Manager for Microsoft.



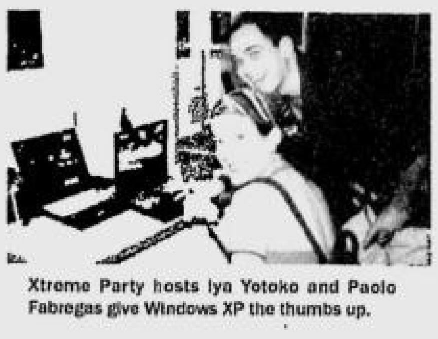
Cocktails in hand, guests feed their curiosity at the Windows XP Expo. The Windows XP Expo was held at the Cinema 1 of Greenbelt Mall, the first ever exhibit to be held inside a moviehouse.

Codie, a purebred golden retriever, poses with owner Jojo Ayson, Microsoft product manager for Exchange and .Net Servers at the Windows XP Expo.

Windows XP is for everyone. Philamlife's Jun San Juan shares the stage with son Mark Anthony, a medical student. The two demonstrated Windows XP's fast-user switching capabilities.

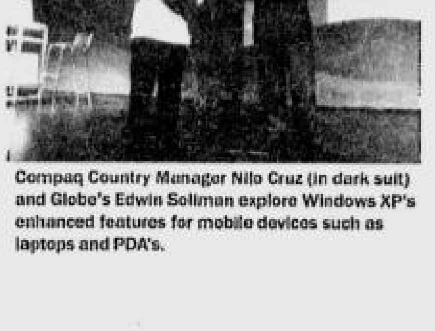
(L - R) Mark Phibbs, Nilo Cruz, Richard Francis, Microsoft Philippines Managing Director, Ricky Banaag, Intel Microelectronics Country Manager and Jimmy Yam, Dell Managing Director for South Asia Developing Market Group welcome the arrival of Windows XP.

Mark Phibbs, Microsoft General Manager for Asia, gives the closing remarks at the Windows XP corporate launch.

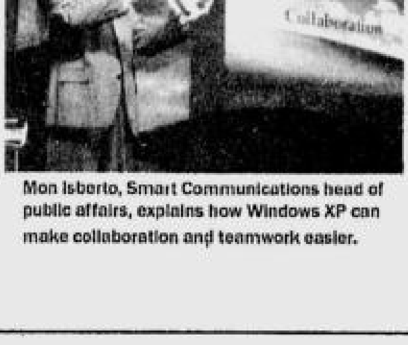


Xtreme Party hosts Iya Yotoko and Paolo Fabregas give Windows XP the thumbs up.

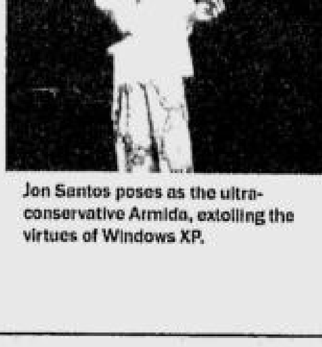
Thousands partied at the Xtreme Party.



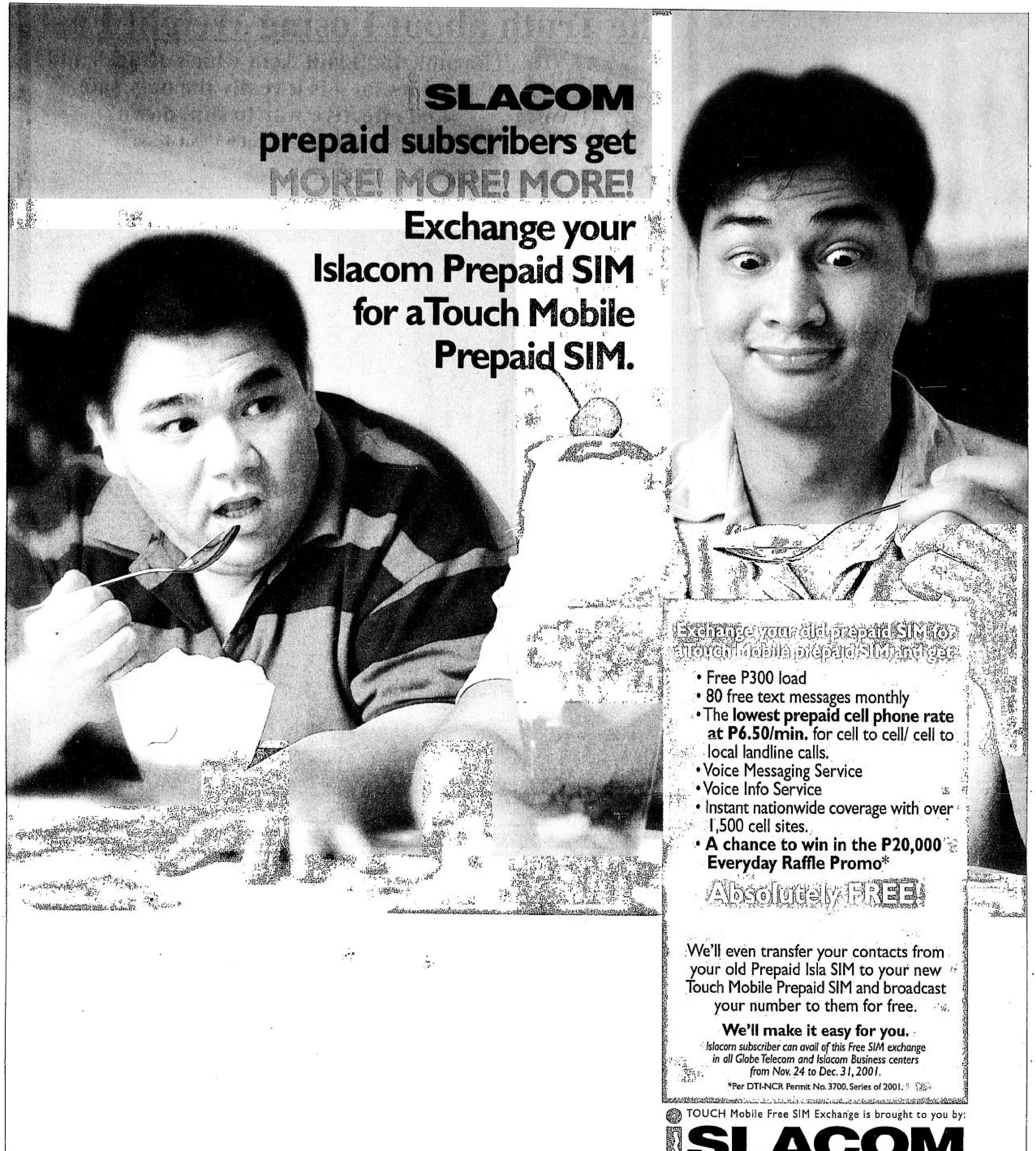
Compaq Country Manager Nilo Cruz (in dark suit) and Globe's Edwin Soliman explore Windows XP's enhanced features for mobile devices such as laptops and PDA's.



Mon Isberto, Smart Communications head of public affairs, explains how Windows XP can make collaboration and teamwork easier.



Jon Santos poses as the ultra-conservative Armida, extolling the virtues of Windows XP.



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SaturdaySPECIAL

Move over, Harry Potter–here comes Frodo Baggins

BY PAUL MAJENDIE

LONDON—Move over, boy wizard Harry Potter. Here comes Frodo Baggins, the intrepid Hobbit.

Magical mystery tour

For the second time in a month, moviegoers around the globe are being invited on a magical mystery tour through the world of wizards.

First came "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone," the film version of the first of author J.K. Rowling's tales of a young wizard, which have sold 100 million copies in just four years.

Now it's the turn of "The Lord of the Rings," the J.R.R. Tolkien trilogy that has sold 100 million copies in half a century and was voted the book of the 20th century in many millennium polls.

"Lord of the Rings" director Peter Jackson, whose "The Fellowship of the Ring"—the film version of the first book of the Tolkien trilogy—has its world premiere in London on Dec. 10, has insisted there is no wizard rivalry.

Competition

"Everybody paints this sort of competition between 'Harry Potter' and the 'Lord of the Rings.' It's sort of crazy because I just wish Harry Potter all the best," the New Zealander said.

But inevitably fantasy fans will compare notes and critics watch to see which film wins at the box office.

Making the trilogy amid the picturesque splendors of New Zealand was a mammoth 274-day undertaking for Jackson and his army of actors, designers and special effects wizards.

The $300 million series is billed as the first time a director has made three films at once. The movies are to be released one at a time over the next three Christmases. Dec. 19 is the first release date.

Fantasy world

Film production notes on Friday last week revealed how Jackson tried to climb inside Tolkien's mind to recreate a fantasy world already real to literary fans worldwide.

> Inevitably fantasy fans will compare notes and critics watch to see which film wins at the box office

"When there was a question about how to proceed, I would just shut my eyes and imagine the characters in my head, the same way a million readers around the world have shut their eyes and seen these books come alive as personal movies in their heads," he said.

"We had to shoot it as one big story because that is what it is," he said. "I look forward to the day when audiences can sit down and watch all three films in a row because it is one big story and adventure."

The films look set to make an international star of 20-year-old American Elijah Wood, who plays the pivotal role of Frodo Baggins, the shy but intrepid hobbit at the heart of the epic tale.

Middle Earth

Wood loved the location: "New Zealand is Middle Earth. It has every geological formation and geographical landscape you can imagine and some you couldn't."

He is given solid backup by Ian McKellen as Gandalf, who the British actor described as "the archetypal wizard. He is related to Merlin and maybe Prospero but is very much his own man." *Reuters*

WOOD. Intrepid Hobbitt.

"Now my hair will be evermore beautiful"
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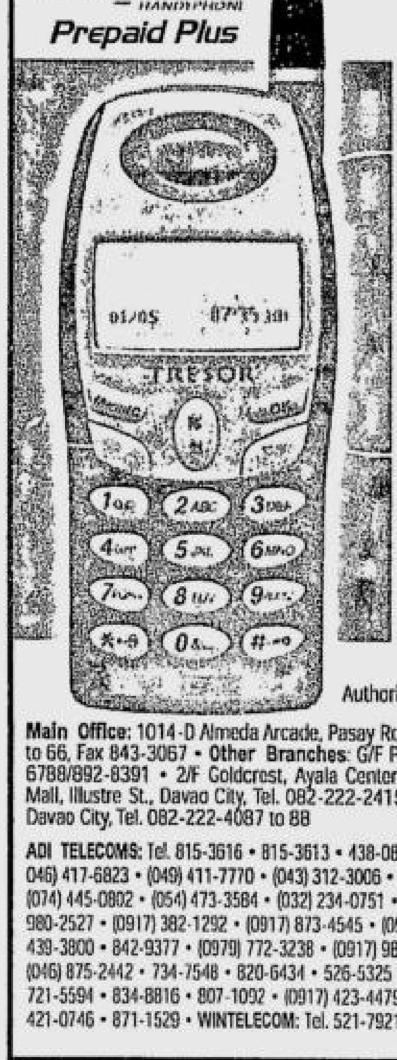
The No.1 Salon User of
SEBASTIAN
Colourshines
CELLOPHANES
uses only
Pure and Genuine
Sebastian Products
Better than the colour you were born with



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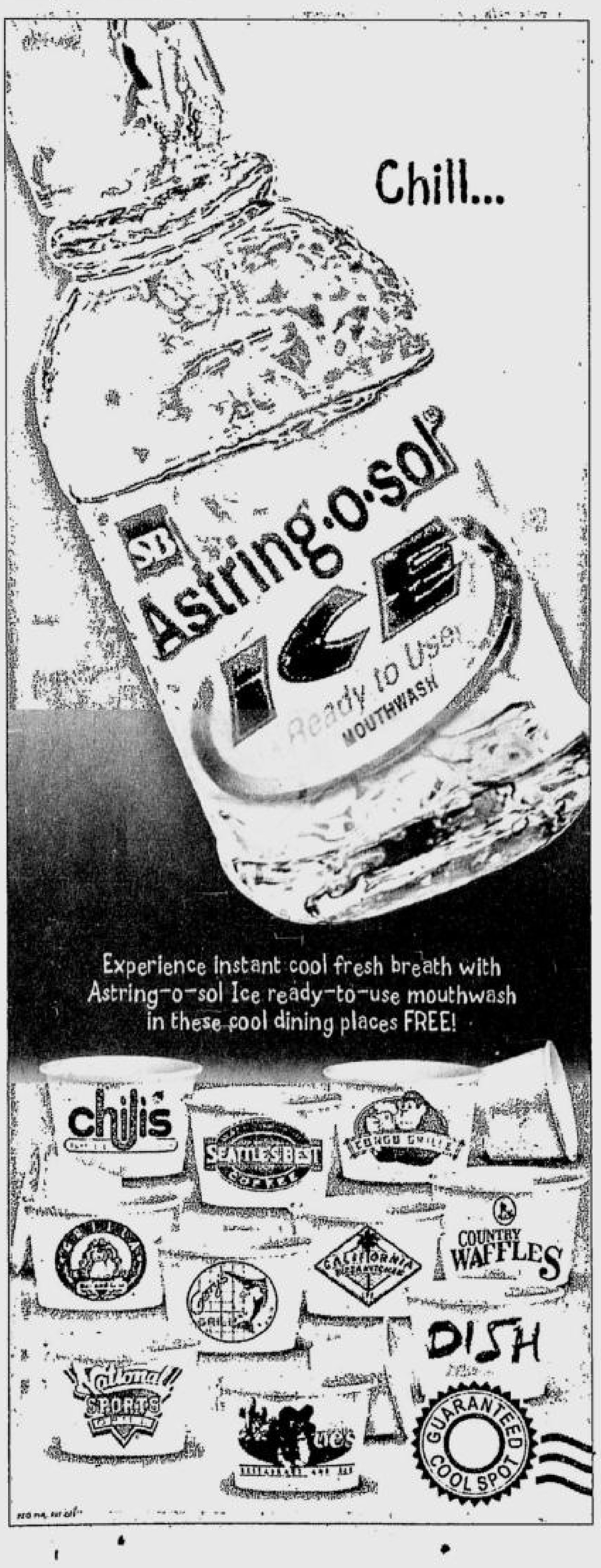

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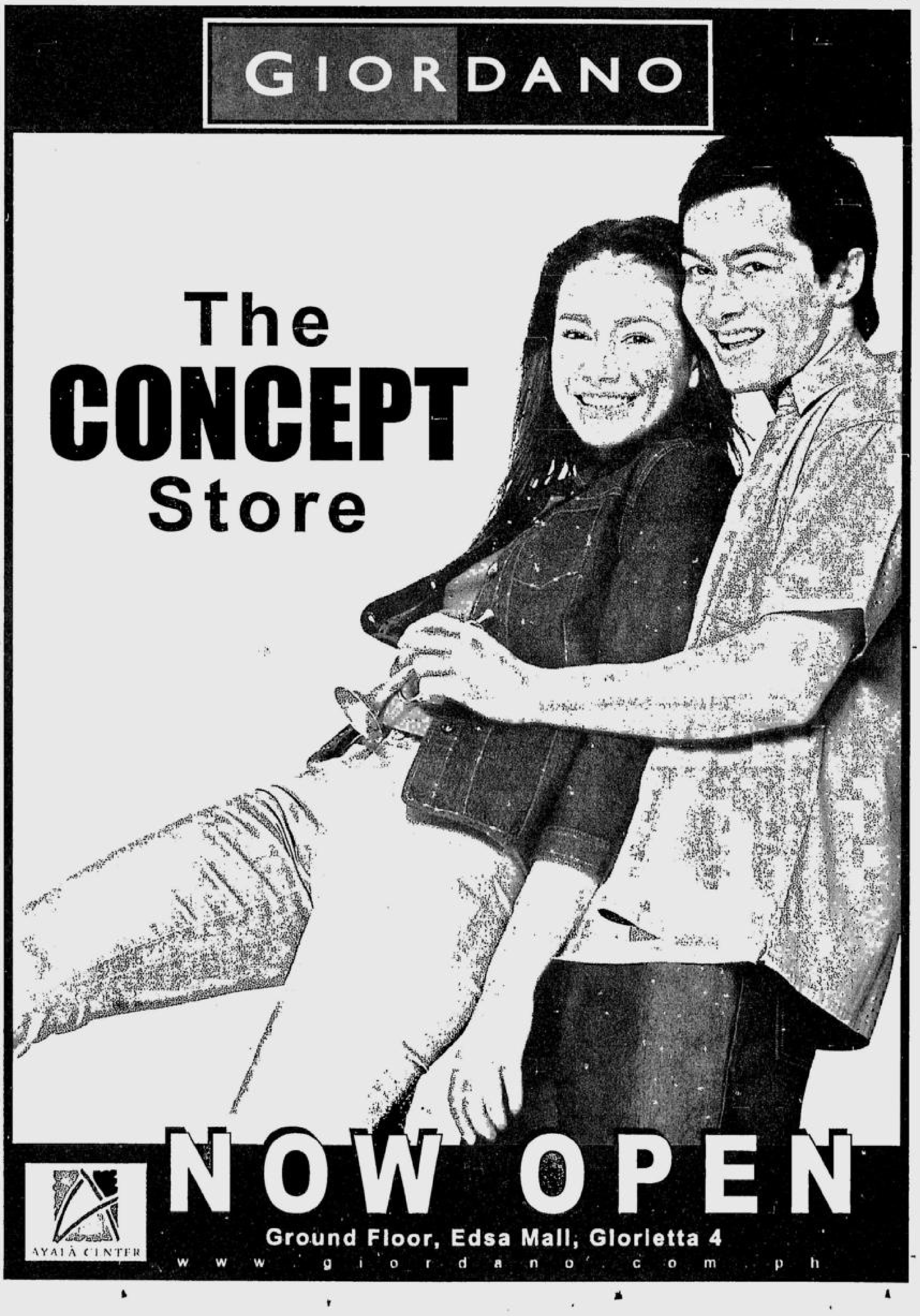

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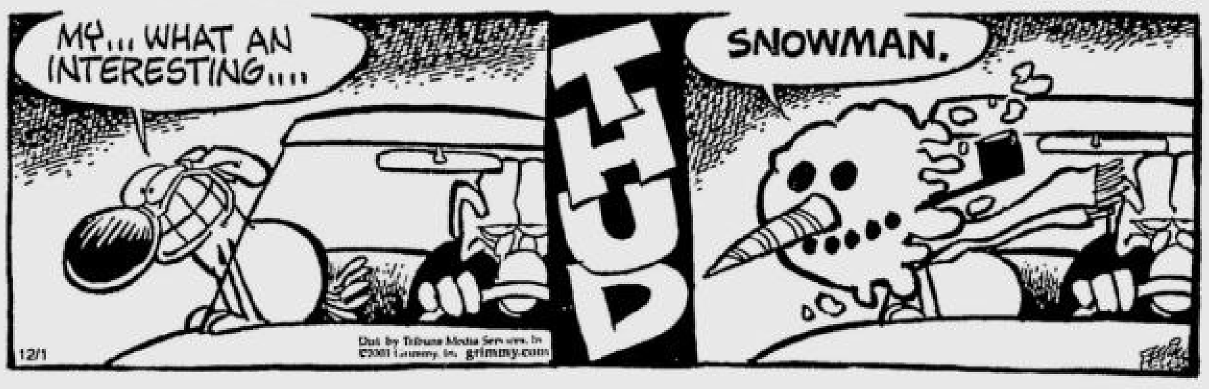
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


MY... WHAT AN INTERESTING....
THUD
SNOWMAN.
12/1
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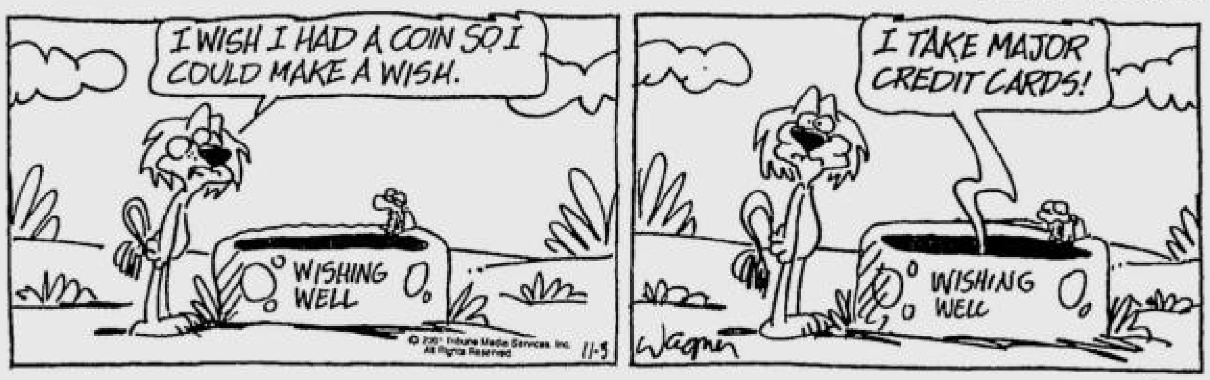
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I WISH I HAD A COIN SO I COULD MAKE A WISH.
WISHING WELL
I TAKE MAJOR CREDIT CARDS!
WISHING WELL
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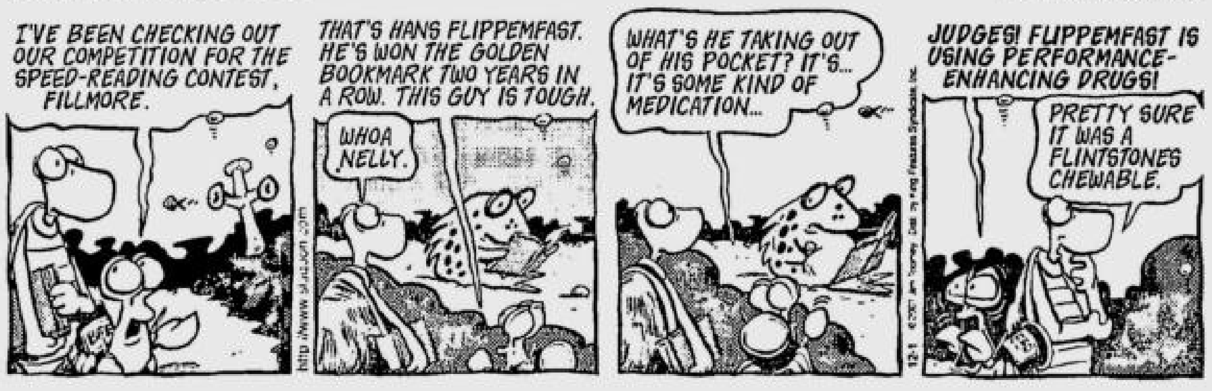
11-5
Wagner

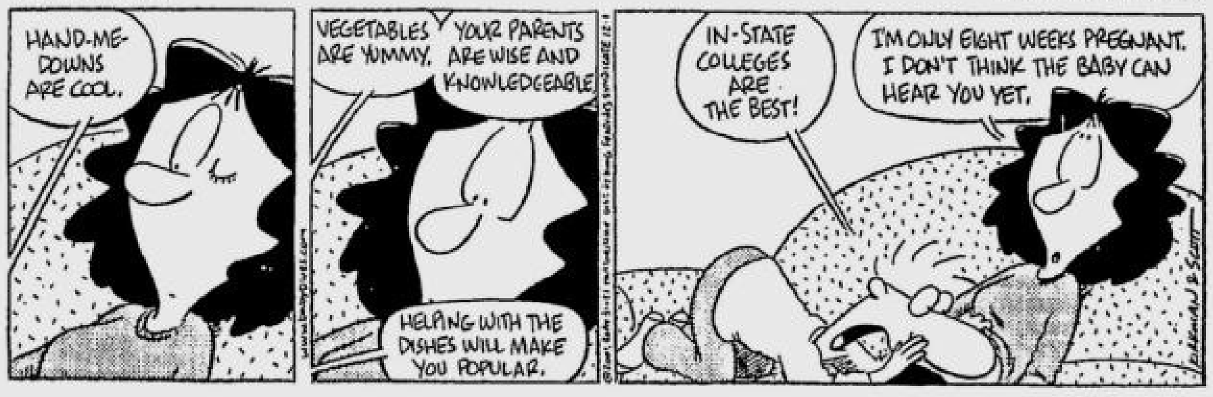
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


I'VE BEEN CHECKING OUT OUR COMPETITION FOR THE SPEED-READING CONTEST, FILLMORE.
THAT'S HANS FLIPPEMFAST. HE'S WON THE GOLDEN BOOKMARK TWO YEARS IN A ROW. THIS GUY IS TOUGH.
WHOA NELLY.
WHAT'S HE TAKING OUT OF HIS POCKET? IT'S... IT'S SOME KIND OF MEDICATION...
JUDGES! FLIPPEMFAST IS USING PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS!
PRETTY SURE IT WAS A FLINTSTONES CHEWABLE.
http://www.slagoon.com
12-1

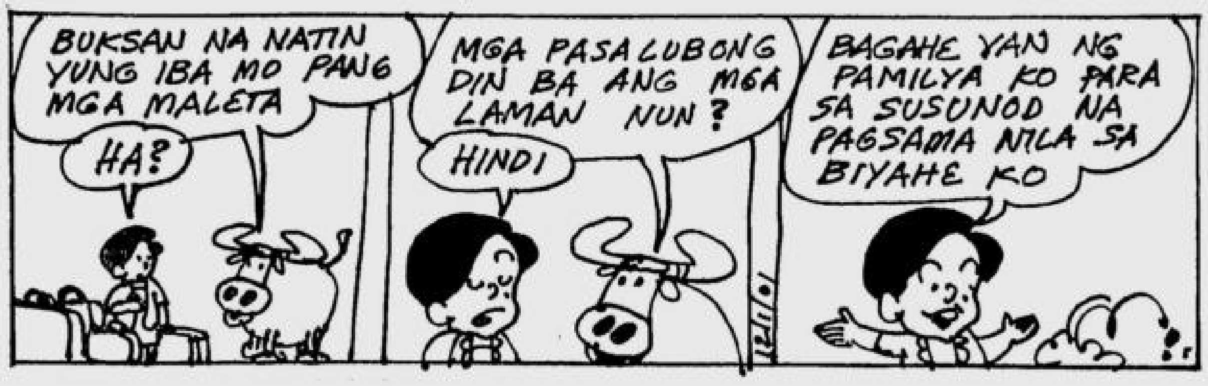
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAND-ME-DOWNS ARE COOL.
VEGETABLES ARE YUMMY.
YOUR PARENTS ARE WISE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE.
HELPING WITH THE DISHES WILL MAKE YOU POPULAR.
IN-STATE COLLEGES ARE THE BEST!
I'M ONLY EIGHT WEEKS PREGNANT. I DON'T THINK THE BABY CAN HEAR YOU YET.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

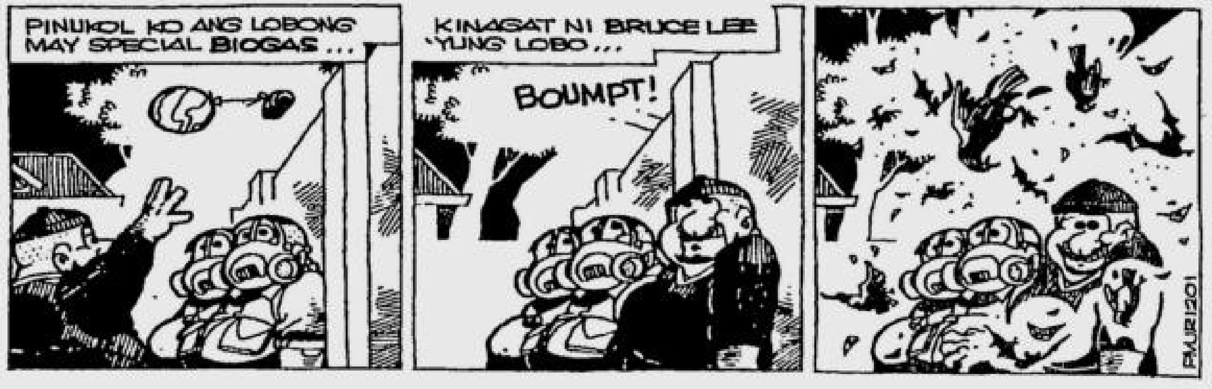
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


BUKSAN NA NATIN YUNG IBA MO PANG MGA MALETA
HA?
MGA PASALUBONG DIN BA ANG MGA LAMAN NUN?
HINDI
BAGAHE YAN NG PAMILYA KO PARA SA SUSUNOD NA PAGSAMA NILA SA BIYAHE KO
12/1/01

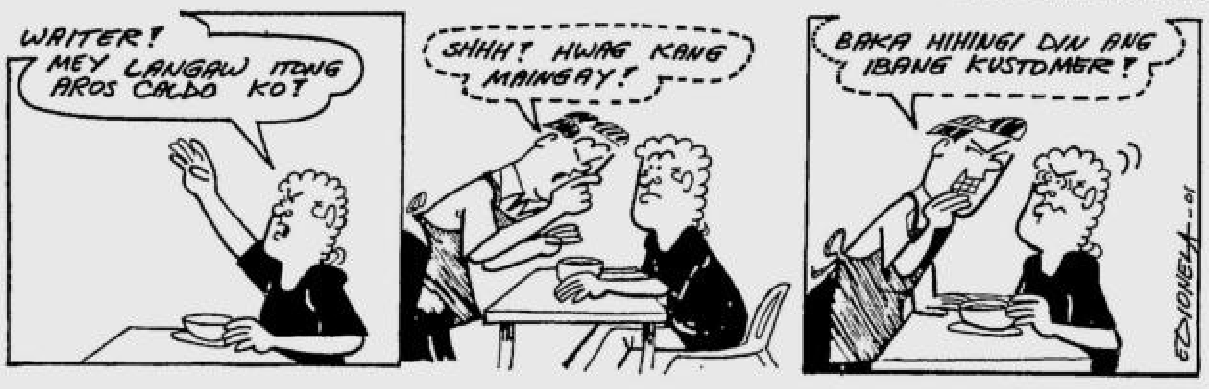
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PINUKOL KO ANG LOBONG MAY SPECIAL BIOGAS ...
KINAGAT NI BRUCE LEE 'YUNG LOBO ...
BOUMPT!
PMJR1201

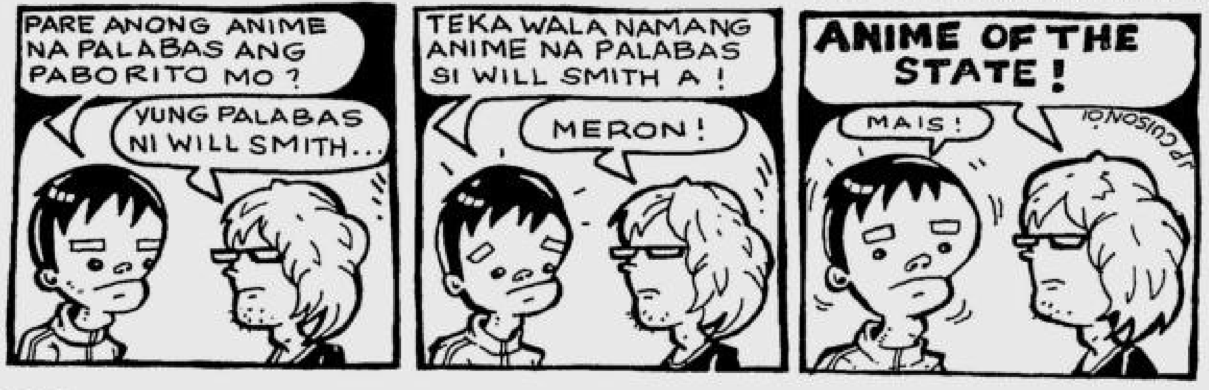
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


WRITER! MEY LANGAW ITONG AROS CALDO KO!
SHHH! HWAG KANG MAINGAY!
BAKA HIHINGI DIN ANG IBANG KUSTOMER!
EDIONELA -01

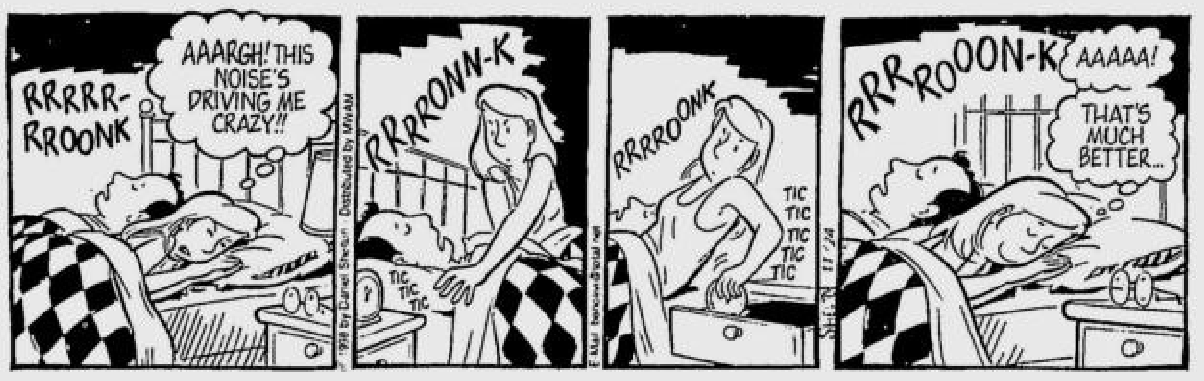
GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL/BENG/MANIX


PARE ANONG ANIME NA PALABAS ANG PABORITO MO?
YUNG PALABAS NI WILL SMITH...
TEKA WALA NAMANG ANIME NA PALABAS SI WILL SMITH A!
MERON!
ANIME OF THE STATE!
MAIS!
JP CUISON 01

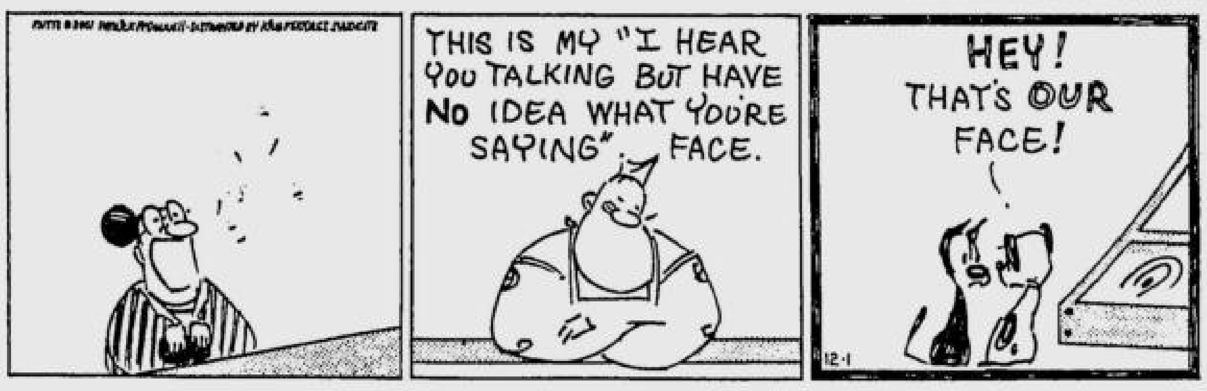
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


RRRRR-RROONK
AAARGH! THIS NOISE'S DRIVING ME CRAZY!!
RRRRONN-K
TIC TIC TIC
RRRROONK
TIC TIC TIC TIC TIC
RRRROOON-K
AAAAA!
THAT'S MUCH BETTER...

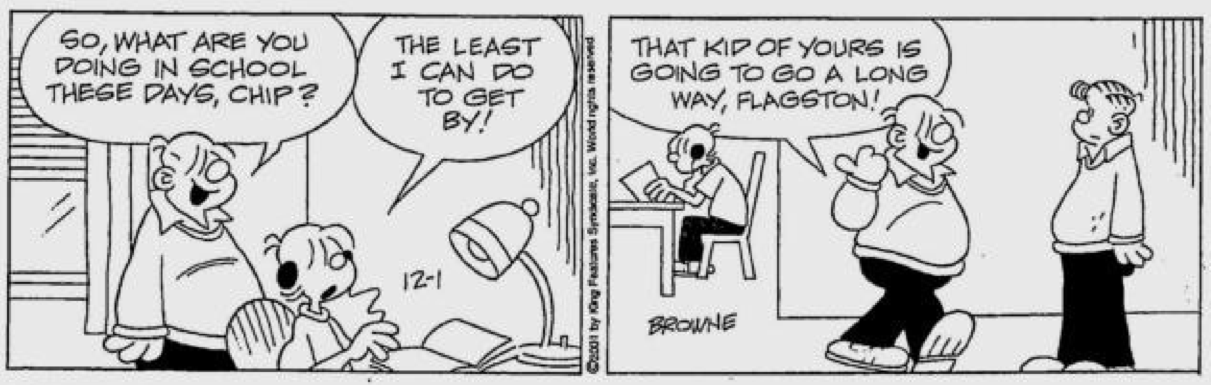
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS MY "I HEAR YOU TALKING BUT HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE SAYING" FACE.
HEY! THAT'S OUR FACE!
12-1

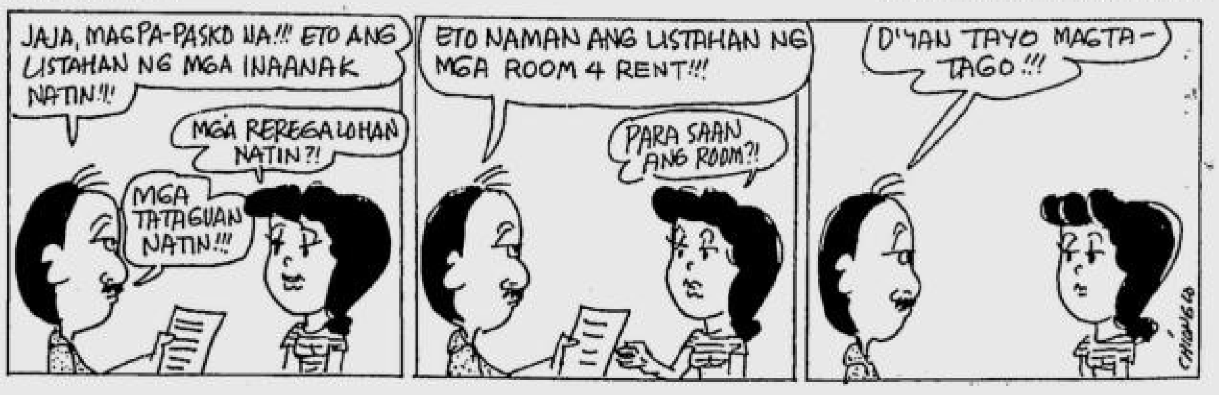
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN SCHOOL THESE DAYS, CHIP?
THE LEAST I CAN DO TO GET BY!
12-1
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
THAT KID OF YOURS IS GOING TO GO A LONG WAY, FLAGSTON!
BROWNE

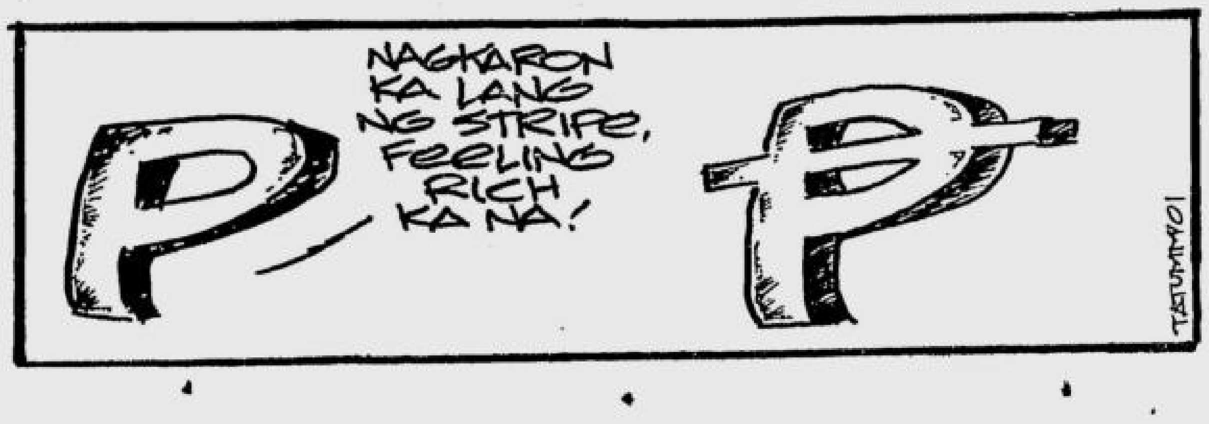
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MAGPA-PASKO NA!!! ETO ANG LISTAHAN NG MGA INAANAK NATIN!!!
MGA REREGALOHAN NATIN?!
MGA TATAGUAN NATIN!!!
ETO NAMAN ANG LISTAHAN NG MGA ROOM 4 RENT!!!
PARA SAAN ANG ROOM?!
D'YAN TAYO MAGTA-TAGO!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NAGKARON KA LANG NG STRIPE, FEELING RICH KA NA!
TATUMM'01

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Woody Allen, Richard Pryor, Bette Midler, Lee Trevino, Charlene Tilton, Lou Rawls

Happy Birthday: Your added discipline will enable you to finish projects and tie up loose ends. Your creative energy is overflowing, which is an exciting change. Develop your talents and stay busy. Your colorful personality will bring rewards. Your numbers: 14, 26, 31, 35, 38, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't let problems get to you. Anger just holds you back. Keep opinions or ideas to yourself for the time being. Work alone and accomplish as much as possible.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Be confident and professional at work. You may be feeling uncertain about the sudden changes at work, but you'll shine if you don't show it.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't hesitate to ask questions. You will learn a great deal if you listen to close friends or relatives you respect. You may want to check your motives for any possible dishonesty.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't take chances. Being preoccupied can cause upsetting mishaps. Don't make unreasonable promises without considering the request carefully. Disagreements will erupt if you speak your mind.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You should give yourself more credit. Your ability to cooperate with others will help you reach your objectives. Anart object for your home may be a wise investment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It's time to improve yourself or your position at work. You can purchase items that will enhance your appearance. Avoid senseless disagreements.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You will be feeling restless. Consider taking a car trip, but be sure that your vehicle is serviced first. Arguments with relatives may lead to a split in the family.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You shouldn't make excuses to avoid medical attention. Put your mind at ease by attending to any health problems that have been troubling you. You will reap the benefits if you spend money on your residence. Change will do you a world of good.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can have a romantic adventure if you get to know your mate all over again. If you are single, meet someone new. Make arrangements to spend quality time with someone special.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't bother trying to convince others of your beliefs. You may find it difficult to communicate with others today, especially if you hear information that may damage someone's reputation. Don't be the bearer of bad news.

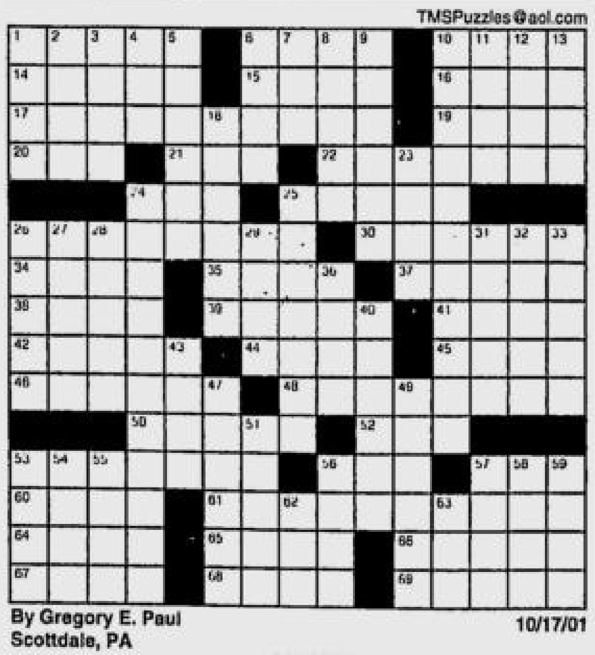
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Check out philosophical groups or physical-fitness programs. You know you have the discipline to make changes.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be careful how you handle personal matters. Difficulties with a relative may result in estrangement. Try to understand both sides of the issue. You may want to sit this argument out.

Birthday Baby: You are quite the little wizard. Your lively curiosity will lead to all sorts of interesting scenarios. You are bright and quick to join in the action.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA

10/17/01

ACROSS
1 Skeleton
6 Q-tip
10 Wage-slave's letters
14 Prevent
15 Fourth base?
16 Gymnast Korbut
17 Joseph Levitch on stage
19 Las Vegas light
20 "__ Justice for All"
21 Auerbach or Holzman
22 Those who remain
24 __-Tiki
25 Church singers
26 Become less
30 Conclude
34 Always
35 Afternoon gatherings
37 Shoot from cover
38 Chance taken
39 Jewish gossip
41 Calendar info
42 Victor at Gettysburg
44 Rounded handle
45 Pretty soon
46 Classify
48 Greek letters
50 Garden-variety
52 Building wing
53 Wisconsinites
56 L. Michaels' show
57 Fast plane, briefly
60 Spoken
61 Annie Mae Bullock on stage
64 Italian bread?
65 S.E. Asian country
66 Relative size
67 Former acorns
68 Ceases
69 Philly player

DOWN
1 __ California
2 Cooking box
3 Nudnik
4 Go astray
5 "Sophie's Choice" author
6 Cast off
7 Holy cow!
8 Anabaptist sect
9 Confer
10 Leonard Rosenberg on stage
11 Hilarity
12 Sikorsky or Stravinsky
13 Aficionados
18 Compassion
23 Affectations
24 Issur Danielovitch on stage
25 Bed of a river
26 Stuffed __ (kishke)
27 Wrigley vines
28 Tablelands
29 Try to find
31 Holly Hunter film, with "The"
32 Writer Sinclair
33 Hammer heads
36 Subway station
40 Part of AWOL
43 Old Gaelic
47 Hard-shelled reptile
49 Treat badly
51 Thai or Korean, e.g.
53 Philippine machete
54 Opera highlight
55 Nighttime
56 Unwanted lip
57 Hidden obstacle
58 Move goods
59 Timber-to-be
62 Agree silently
63 NBC's parent

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

G	A	G	A	■	T	A	M	E	D	■	P	O	E	M
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E	S	S	■	S	P	R	E	A	D	E	A	G	L	E
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10/17/01

Gladys and the Boxers with K specialize in adult comedy

By Jocelyn Valle

BROSAS, GUEVARRA AND LARRAZABAL. Packed venues.

GLADYS and the Boxers with K is a staple in live entertainment venues in the metropolis, making the trio composed of veteran karaoke-bar hosts Gladys Guevarra, Kakai Brosas and Daniel Larrazabal, a popular comedy act. They even bagged Aliw Awards 2001's Best Performance in a Music Lounge Award.

Petite

But before you check out one of their gigs, be warned that GBWK specializes in adult comedy. For instance, when Daniel seriously croons "Unchained Melody," the petite Gladys hides behind Kakai, who's tall, broad-shouldered and stands akimbo. Gladys slips her hands inside the gaps between Kakai's sides and elbows to gesture the literal translation of the song's lyrics.

So when Daniel comes to the "I've hungered. . ." part, Gladys' hands hug Kakai's tummy and Kakai looks like she hasn't eaten for weeks. For words with several meanings (e.g. touch), they choose to interpret the ones with sexual connotations, bringing the house down.

Singing style

The audience keeps laughing as Gladys and Kakai alternately ape some female singers—from the tone of the voice, to the singing style and to facial mannerisms. Kakai is particularly funny as Malou Barry because they have the same deep, husky voice. The act turns hilarious when Kakai exaggerates her speaking voice and acts like a fire-spewing dragon.

Gladys and Kakai also delight in swapping green jokes and insults. Shy Daniel only grins in embarrassment when his supposedly feminine groupmates include him in their loaded conversation.

The audience must share his tolerance as they are fair game to Gladys and Kakai. When the trio finds out who's having a birthday the night they're onstage, they tell him or her to stand up and they stage something like a healing session in prayer rallies, uttering not some religious mantra but the words of the birthday song.

How does GBWK come up with these zany antics? "*Sa mga kwentuhan lang namin*," replies Gladys, stressing that they don't really hold formal brainstorming sessions. They've known each other for a long time and they see each other almost every night. So, Gladys explains, gag materials just crop up during their casual chats.

They also rely on the season's hot topics and newsmakers.

> If their brand of comedy is not your cup of tea, you can still enjoy their rendition of Top 40 hits

"*Depende rin sa* situation," adds Gladys, who's also a rising comedienne on TV.

Album

GBWK seems determined to stay long on the scene. They continuously pack the venues where they perform and they have also recorded an album under Star Records, with the trio's name as the title.

Expectedly, the CD collection attempts to capture GBWK's humor with tunes like "Ako'y Napapa-Uhh," "Hulog" (which is the Tagalog version of "Fallin'"), "Sirang Plaka," "Chenelyn" and "Papalitan na Kita."

Wit is not GBWK's only ticket to show business. Gladys, Daniel and Kakai are fantastic singers as well. So if their brand of comedy is not your cup of tea, you can still enjoy their rendition of Top 40 hits.

By the way, if you have the misfortune of becoming the night's butt of jokes, the trio will try to make you feel better after the show.

Now you're ready to watch GBWK's shows, and survive—with a slap-happy smile on your face.

SANCHEZ. Has performed all over the world.

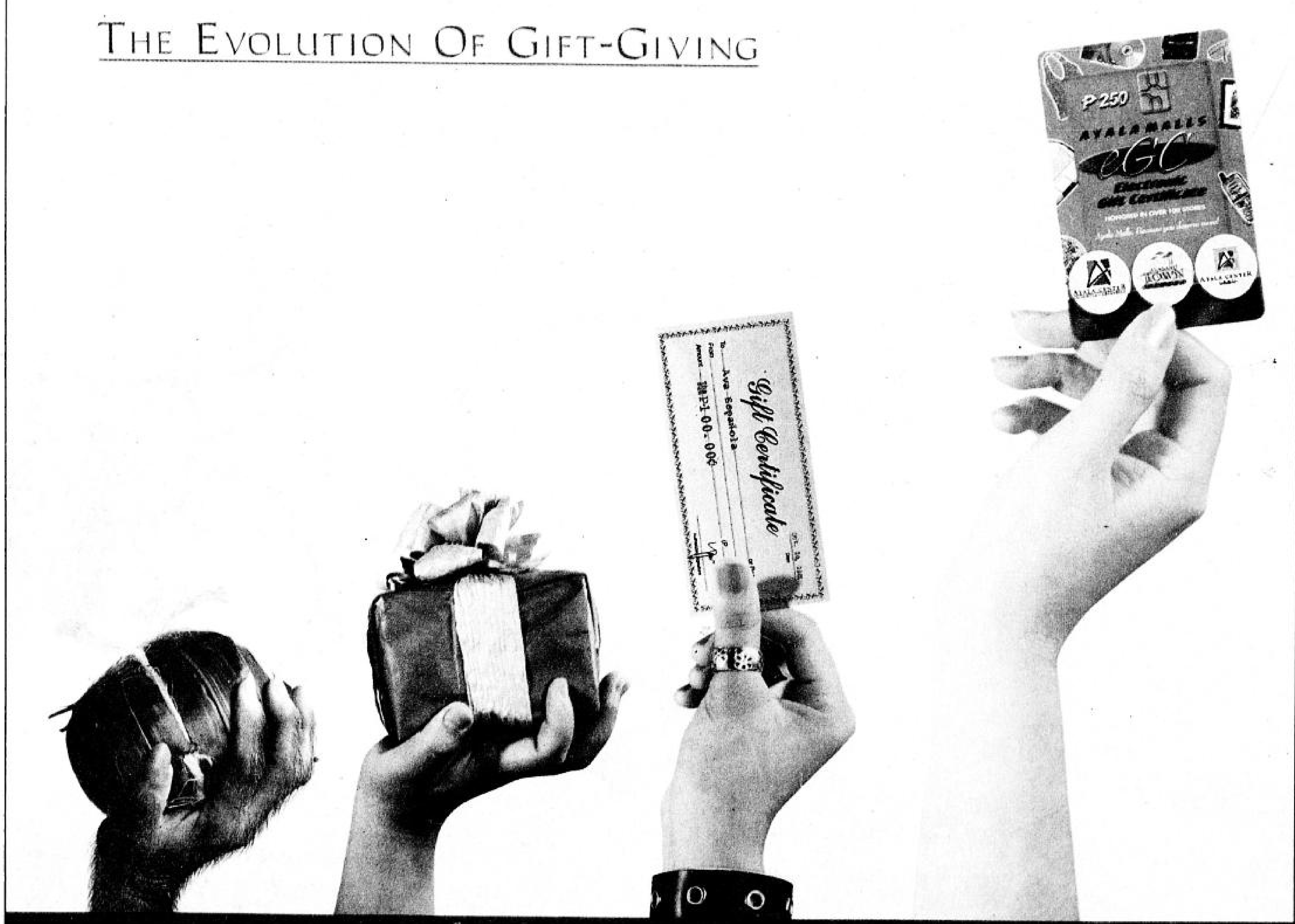
Giselle Sanchez debuts at Music Museum Dec. 5

COMEDIENNE Giselle Sanchez performs for the first time at the Music Museum on Dec. 5 at 8:30 p.m. in a concert appropriately called "First Time Mo?" Guest performers are the Hung Hunks.

Giselle is one of the most sought-after stand-up performers and singers. She is a favorite in corporate shows and has performed all over the world including the world-famous Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas and the Anaheim Convention Center in California.

The comedienne started out eight years ago when she was still a UP Mass Communication student and she auditioned and got a break in several TV shows. She credits Noel Trinidad, Tessie Tomas and Johnny Manahan as among those who helped her out when she was just starting.

Call 721-6726 or Elaine 0919-251-3673.



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Philadelphia is still proud of its heroes and underdogs

SYLVESTER Stallone (left) and Tommy Morrison work on a scene for the film "Rocky V" on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art in front of a statue of Rocky.

By David B. Caruso

PHILADELPHIA—A lot has changed in this gritty city since Rocky Balboa stormed up the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art on film, 25 years ago this week.

The boxer's old Italian neighborhood in Kensington speaks mostly Spanish now. The grocers in the Italian Market are more likely to be Vietnamese or Cambodian. But one thing hasn't changed: This is still a city proud of its heroes and underdogs.

Reputation

"It was the first film to show how Philadelphians feel about themselves," said Sharon Pinkenson, a longtime city resident and director of the Philadelphia Film Office.

"At the time of Rocky's making. Philadelphia was a city that had a reputation for being dirty, dangerous and bankrupt. It was not a place that people relished the idea of being in or moving to."

"Rocky" showed the dirt, Pinkenson said. But in showing the city at its economic worst, it also portrayed its people as loving, hardworking winners, capable of overcoming the worst odds.

It was an image the city has embraced for a quarter of a century. A statue of Rocky that briefly graced the top of the museum steps now stands outside the sports complex where the Eagles and 76ers play. An annual "Rocky Run" retraces Rocky's sprint up the steps.

Winners

"I don't think anybody here was embarrassed by the blue-collar side of 'Rocky,'" Pinkenson said. "You related to this character. He was a winner, and by extension, we were all winners."

The story of "Rocky" the film is almost as good as the rags-to-riches boxing tale of its mythical hero.

The movie was shot for less than $1 million in 1975. Principal photography in Philadelphia and Los Angeles lasted just 28 days. Sylvester Stallone was an unknown actor who had penned the "Rocky" script in a desperate bid to land himself work.

Producers expected the film to be a slightly better-than-average B picture. Instead it opened on Nov. 21, 1976 to rave reviews, won an Academy Award for best picture, made $117 million and launched four sequels.

Anthem

It also became an anthem for a city that won't throw in the towel.

The Philadelphia of the first "Rocky" movie was a city teetering on the ropes. Jobs were scarce. Kids drank on street corners. Sooty sidewalks and claustrophobic rowhouse apartments dominated every frame. Paulie, the abusive, alcoholic brother of Rocky's girlfriend Adrian, dreamed of upgrading someday from meat packer to loan shark.

The 1980s brought crack cocaine and unprecedented violence. Many of the sagging factories and shipyards that Rocky jogged past in the original had shuttered for good by the release of "Rocky V."

Yet the city survived.

Tourism center

Today, it has reclaimed its downtown as a center for tourism and conventions. Its central neighborhoods of stately brick rowhouses and genteel squares—never shown in "Rocky"—have experienced a real-estate boom.

Skyscrapers—banned from the city until the 1980s—now dominate the skyline Stallone saw from the museum steps. Crime is down. The city has a thriving restaurant scene and is set to open a new concert hall. New football and baseball stadiums will follow.

"In a certain sense, Philadelphia has that underdog plot too," said David Jacobs, a Temple University history professor who arrived in the city in 1975 shortly after "Rocky" was shot.

"When I got here, Philadelphia was almost a forgotten city. It was the city that wasn't. It was the city that used to be," he said. "Today Philadelphia is much more on the cultural map, and 'Rocky' helped put it there." *AP*

Sophia Loren, Italian movie greats receive De Sica awards

ROME—Sophia Loren paid tribute to Italian director Vittorio De Sica on Monday as she and a cast of Italian movie greats gathered at the presidential palace to receive achievement awards named in De Sica's honor.

Loren recalled the first time she met De Sica, the four-time Academy Award winner and director of the 1948 masterpiece "Bicycle Thief," at Rome's Cinecitta studios.

"I was 15 1/2, and we were in Cinecitta; I was doing a small part in a film, he saw me, looked at me, and said: 'We'll see each other very soon.'

"Perhaps he was thinking of 'The Gold of Naples,'" Loren recalled, referring to her role as a pizza maker in De Sica's 1954 film.

With Loren at the Quirinale palace and receiving honors were directors Bernardo Bertolucci, Franco Zeffirelli and Michelangelo Antonioni and other masters of Italian cinema.

The awards were given out in a special ceremony to honor the 100th anniversary of De Sica's birth. He died in 1974 after having directed 34 feature films and became one of the most influential post-war directors.

"To receive this award has been very moving," Loren said. "I would have wanted Vittorio by my side." *AP*

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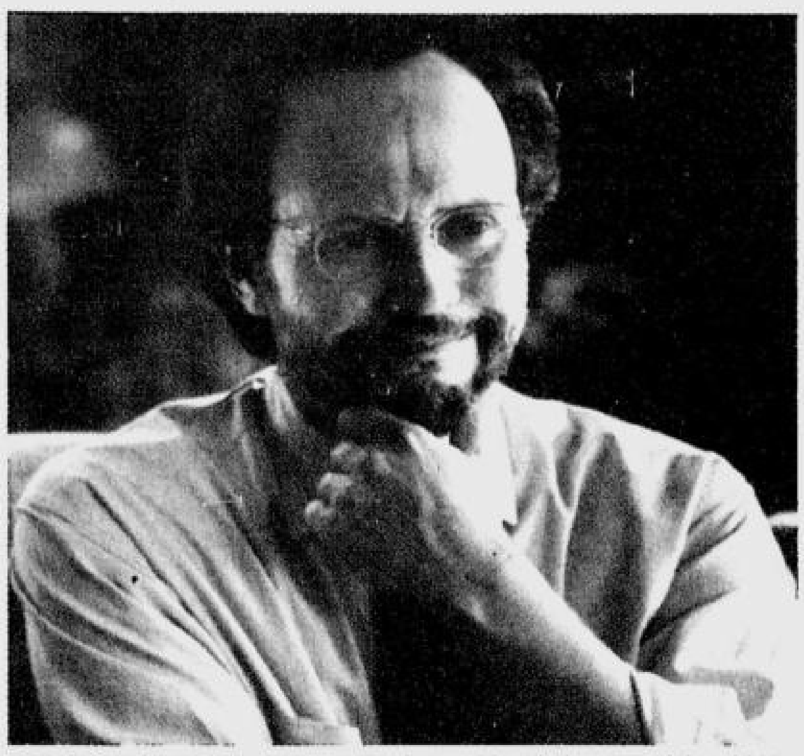
Comedian Billy Crystal talks about his personal monsters



CRYSTAL. His childhood "monsters" were his relatives—and they hid in Brooklyn!

IT seems that Billy Crystal was born to play the jocular Mike Wazowski in "Monsters, Inc." Having missed out "Toy Story," the brilliant comedian does wonders in this fitfully funny comic gem, revolving around the largest scare factory in the monster world where the top kid scarer is James P. Sullivan (John Goodman), a huge, intimidating monster with blue fur, large purple spots and horns, known as "Sulley" to his friends.

Best friend

His Scare Assistant, best friend and roommate is Crystal's Mike, a lime green, opinionated, feisty, one-eyed monster. Scaring children isn't such an easy job, though—monsters believe children are toxic and that direct contact with them would be catastrophic. Here he talks about some of the secrets behind Monsters, in his usual self-depreciating style. Q & A:

What made you want to do a kid's movie?

I didn't think of this as a kids' movie when I did it. I thought it was great. The concept of it was fantastic. I knew the audience that would come to see this would be adults and kids and the older, wrinkled kids would love this movie too.

You and John (Goodman) were working together. That's very rare in a voice session.

I kept pushing for it, I did the first two sessions alone and I didn't like it. It was lonely and it was frustrating. And, you know Pete (Docter, the director) would say, "Could you give me one that's doing the same thing, but now ask it as a question?" And I would go, "I'm not doin' this."

Together

I said, "Why don't you get John in here? We'll do it together—we can do everything you want but we'll do it together. Then it'll be natural. Then the editor won't be the one who has to put it all together so it sounds real." Well, we did it and it was great.

Were you uncontrollable when you were working together? Would you go off on all sorts of tangents?

Good ones! As a director and an actor, I encourage improvisation but in character and in the moment of what it is. My guy, I thought, was free enough and wild enough to just do anything. And it's up to them to pick the ones they want and use it.

I kept saying to Pete, "No, go. It's a little darker but at least you have it. Why was everybody screaming and laughing in the control booth if you're not gonna use it?

Did you fight for your character to have more than one eye?

No. I wanted him to have balls. We found out that he did in that one scene. Evidently, something hurt. They don't give you a thumb and they don't give you balls. I don't know which one I'd rather have!

What about your own monsters when you were a kid—where did they hide?

Relatives—and they hid in Brooklyn! I didn't have a specific monster guy. I had generalized anxiety, which is worse. I had fear of the dark, I didn't like being in the dark. Sounds bothered me. I had really good hearing and when you're scared, it gets heightened so you hear scratching noises or something.

Burglaries

We'd had some burglaries in the area, always someone breaking in. That was the thing. If you're home alone, who's gonna take care of you? Who's gonna fend off whatever it was? Just the unknown. It was a tiny, little house.

There wasn't room for much. My room was in the back and I didn't like the dark so I would say, "Keep the light on." I stopped doing that around two or three years ago. I keep the door open a little bit.

Was there a particular movie monster that may have scared you?

There were some pretty scary movies back then which now seem not as scary to some people. But "Psycho," as a kid, was just terrifying. "Bambi," to a kid, was scary.

Was there an animated film you were attached to?

Yeah, "Pinocchio." It's a great story, the little boy, you could relate to the kid. Jiminy Cricket was a phenomenal character. The epic animation, the whale, Cleo, all the other stuff that Disney was able to put in movies, amazing ideas!

Excited

It's still great. People are excited that "Snow White" came out on DVD.

Someone calls you to do an animated movie. What do you do?

If it's John Lasseter who calls me, I go, where do I sign and when do I start? I loved this idea. They brought a piece, about 35, 40 seconds of him animated with my voice lines from "My Giant," I realized. "The size of the hero is determined by the size of the villain. Without Goliath, David is just some kid throwing rocks."

It was this over and over again with this guy talkin' and movin' his hands. And they told me the concept and brought some storyboards and paintings and Pete explained the movie and that was it! I just thought it was epic!

Director Asif Kapadia wins award for 'The Warrior'

LONDON—Director Asif Kapadia has won a prize for his debut feature film "The Warrior"—which is set in feudal India.

Kapadia was awarded the Sutherland Trophy for the most original and imaginative debut feature film at the closing ceremony of the 45th London Film Festival Thursday.

"The jury found it tremendously difficult to choose a winner since the shortlist was of an exceptionally high standard this year," said festival director Adrian Wootton.

Powerful film

"However, there was a unanimous feeling that 'The Warrior' was superbly directed, written and performed, and it stood out as the strongest and most powerful film. It is a mesmerizing achievement with a real poetic vision."

The film tells the story of a lone warrior who renounces his profession as an enforcer to a local lord following a mystic experience. He flees his desert home in the Indian state of Rajasthan and embarks on a journey to the Himalayas.

The London-born director's short film "Sheep Thief" was widely acclaimed three years ago.

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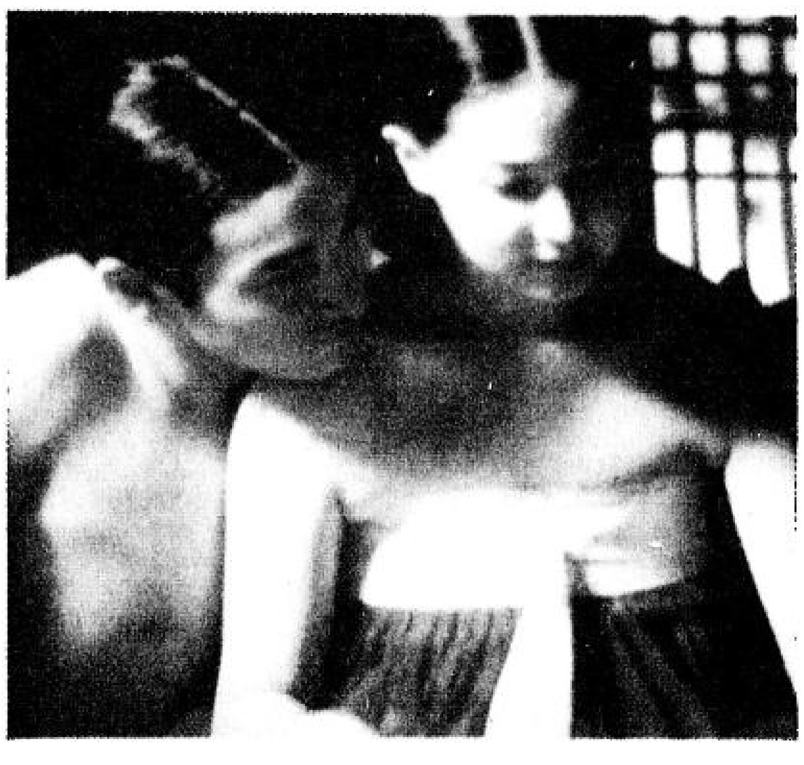


"CHUNHYANG." Epic tale about forbidden love.

By Nestor U. Torre

ASIDE from outstanding movies from the Americas and Europe, the Cinemanila filmfest (Dec. 7 to 16) will showcase a number of exceptional and award-winning movies from Asia.

Thai filmmaker Wisit Sasanatieng's "Tears of the Black Tiger" won the Dragons and Tigers Award at the 2000 Vancouver filmfest, the Jury's Choice Award at the Puchon International Fantastic Film Festival, and a special showcase in UN Certain Regard, the first Thai film to be screened in that event.

Tragic love story

It tells the tragic love story of the daughter of a noble family, and an outlaw. The young man returns home only to find that his father has been killed. Seeking revenge, he becomes a bandit. For her part, she is forced to accept the marriage proposal of a military officer. Will true love still hold sway at the final fade?

From Iran, Iraj Karimi's "Going By" was the winner of the NETPAC Award at the 2001 Fajr Film Festival. Synopsis: Four cars with people belonging to various social classes and with different objectives are travelling to the Caspian Sea. They do not know each other, but the film follows them for a day and travels with each in turn.

"This Is My Moon," by Sri Lankan director Asoka Handagama, won the Young Cinema Award at the 2001 Singapore International filmfest, and was voted as best film at the Cinefan and Seongu festivals.

In war-torn Sri Lanka, a Sinhalese soldier rapes a Tamil woman. He deserts the army and she follows him to his border village. Their presence among the desperately poor villagers upsets the order of things. Jealousy, betrayal, hatred and lust now stalk the village.

Sexual desires

From South Korea, Kim Ki Duk's "The Isle" was awarded the Special Jury Award at the 2001 Fantasporto International Fantasy Film Festival, and the Golden Raven at the 2001 Brussels filmfest. Away from civilization, men travel to an island to fish and to satisfy their sexual desires. A young woman who transports them by boat meets an ex-cop who has the murder of his lover on his conscience.

He tries to take his own life, but she prevents him from doing so. This forges an unusual bond between them.

From Malaysia, Teck Tan's "Spinning Gasing" is that country's first English-language movie and won the NETPAC Special Mention Award at the 2000 Hawaii filmfest. The soundtrack combines urban disco music with traditional Malay folk tunes.

Hip-hop band

This is in harmony with the storyline about a hip-hop band from Kuala Lumpur that heads into the Malay heartland, on the run from loan sharks. The title of the film literally means "spinning top," a metaphor for the relationships underscored in the film.

Turkish director Nur Blige Ceylan's "Clouds of May" won the Golden Tulip for best film and the FIPRESCI Award at the 2000 Istanbul filmfest, and the Special Jury Prize at the 2000 Alexandria film festival.

Trouble starts when a director tries to make a film in a small Anatolian town, where the filmmaker grew up. His father is trying to get the authorities to give him a piece of land; a young man fails in his second attempt to get into university, and the director only wants to make his film.

Also by Turkey's Ceylan is "Kasaba," the winner of the Caligari Film Award from the 1998 Berlin filmfest, the Silver Award at the 1998 Tokyo festival, and the FIPRESCI Award at the 1998 Istanbul filmfest. The film is a strikingly original look at an extended family living in a remote Turkish village.

Four seasons

Structured around the four seasons, the movie slowly reveals more and more about the family and its place in the world.

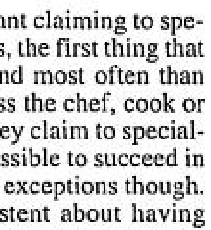
The Thai film, "Nang Nak" by Nonzee Nimibutr, won the NETPAC award at the Rotterdam filmfest and the Best Film trophy at the Asia-Pacific festival. This classic ghost story focuses on a young woman's life, death and vengeance. She dies during childbirth, but her spirit lives on and haunts her husband and those around him.

Finally, "Chunhyang" by Im Kwon-Taek (South Korea) was chosen as Best Picture at the 2000 Hawaii filmfest. It combines the elements of pure film with the tradition of sung theater in retelling an epic tale about forbidden love.

"Chunhyang" is one of the two opening movies (the other is "No Man's Land," from Bosnia) in the 2001 Cinemanila filmfest.

Asian cuisine in Makati

WORD OF MOUTH



Sandy Daza

WHENEVER I see a restaurant claiming to specialize in a variety of cuisines, the first thing that comes to mind is failure. And most often than not, I am proven right. Unless the chef, cook or owner lived in the country they claim to specialize in, it seems close to impossible to succeed in this venture. There are a few exceptions though.

My sister Nina was insistent about having dinner at this new place in Makati. I wasn't too crazy about the idea specially after having heard it specialized in various Asian cuisines. Plus traffic these days can be a killer. Just to avoid being called a killjoy, I went along.

Confusing

BananaLeaf Curry House is one of the most confusing restaurants I have ever visited. The menu is filled with pictures of all the available items that you don't really know what you want to indulge in. So, we played safe and ordered the most popular and most frequently ordered items.

We had chicken and pork sate—authentic! The vegetable Samosa—good and authentic too, deep fried pomfret with chili, a Thai dish of crispy fish with a sweet spicy chili sauce, quite good too but I feel the sauce could have been more creative. The Wok fried squid was stir fried, a bit spicy and delicious.

The Hainanese chicken was authentic. The *kangkong* was also a winner but I felt it needed a bit more of Chinese *bagoong*. One that was new to us was the crispy chicken with mango. This dish is, like the name says, crispy chicken and has a side salad made of mango, crunchy chunks of chicken and a few vegetables. A champion in terms of taste and texture.

Noodle dish

We also had the Penag Char or it looked like Char Kwai Tiao (not sure of the spelling). This is a Singaporean specialty noodle dish. I tried this many years ago from a friend Ricky Yabut whenever his Singaporean grandmom would cook for them. I had fallen in love with it and it had seemed impossible to have something as good until I came across this version. For dessert, I loved the pandan cooler. As a whole, this place offers a different dining experience that I feel will do wonders in spite of our dwindling economy.

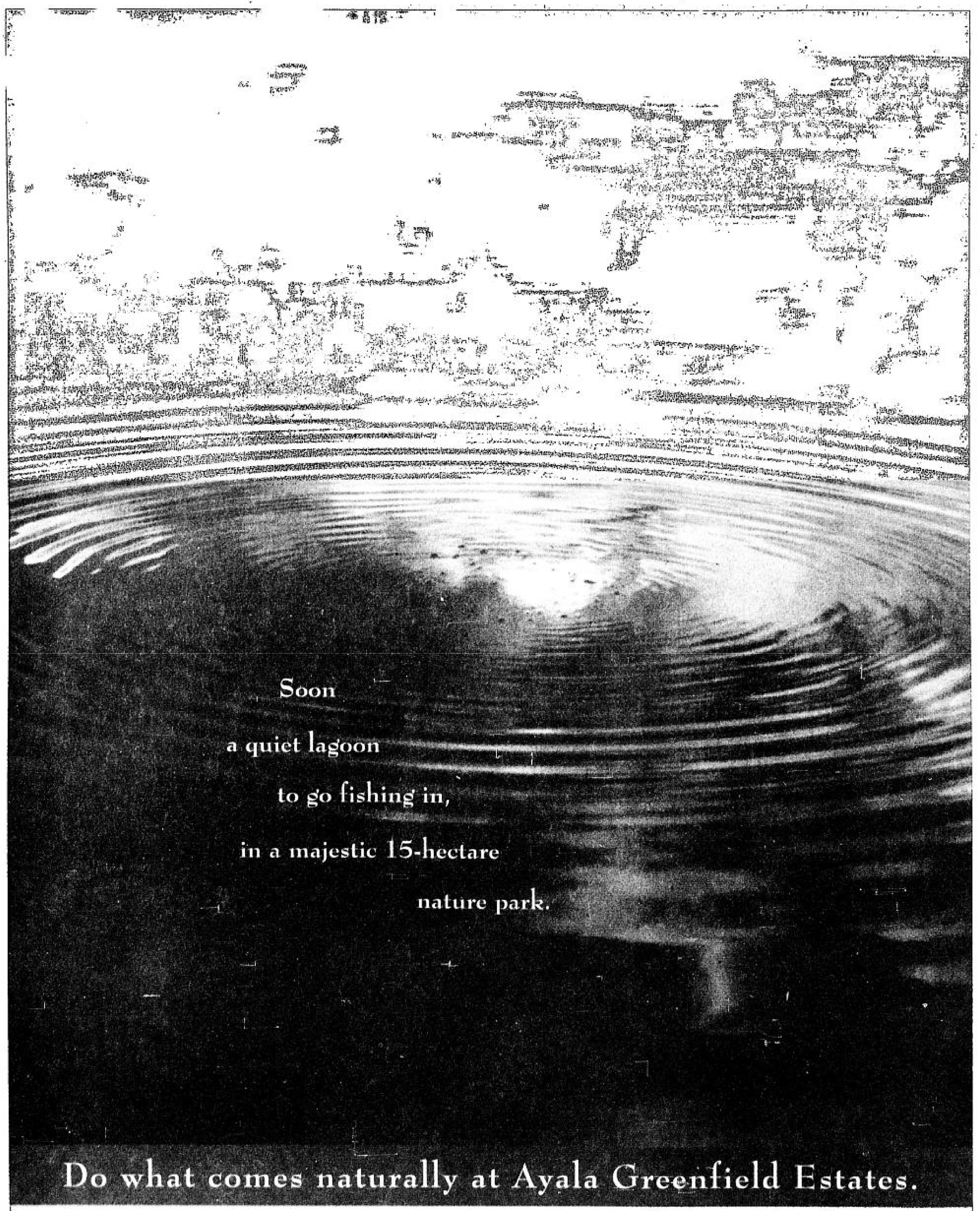
The place specializes in Malaysian, Thai, Singaporean and maybe Indonesian cuisine. They have a window where the guests can watch Malaysian bread making. I plan to go back and try their Bah Kuh The. This is the Singaporean version of *sinigang na* spare ribs. *Sarap!* (a bit *maanghang.)*

Franchise

I think BananaLeaf is a franchise from Singapore and Hong Kong. These days, I try not to argue with Nina's suggestions for even if our tastes sometimes, differ, we have something in common. We both love to eat. *(Malayo ba yon?)*

BananaLeaf Curry House is located at the Plaza bldg., Greenbelt, Ayala Center in Makati, Tel. no. 812-8618, 812-1475.

Happy eating! *sandydaza@hotmail.com*



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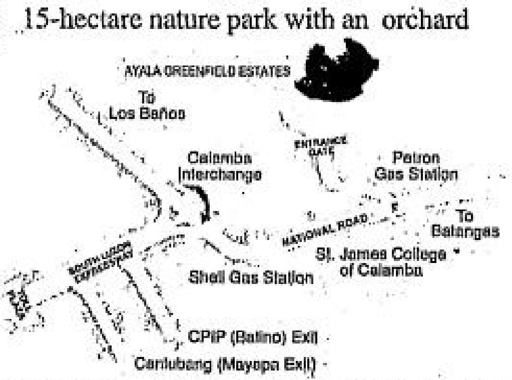

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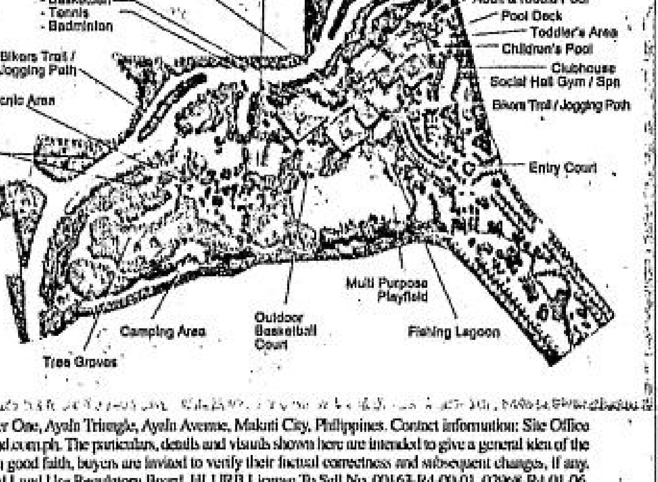

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ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

Ambrose's 'Band of Brothers' focuses on individual soldiers

By Noelani Torre

IF you have been watching TV a lot lately, you can't have failed to notice HBO's newest special event—"Band of Brothers." Certainly one of it most publicized projects to date, this Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks-produced miniseries has been highly anticipated since its conception. HBO Asia is airing a new episode every Tuesday night, with replays on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Having watched "Saving Private Ryan" and having liked it, we decided to catch the special premiere of this much-touted production. Sure enough, after watching the first two episodes—"Currahee" and "Day of Days"—we were hooked.

Depth and substance

The series is, as one reviewer puts it, "'Saving Private Ryan' for grownups." Composed of 10 one-hour episodes, it packs a lot of depth and substance that a two- or three-hour movie can never equal. Here we get the nitty-gritty on the daily existence of frontline soldiers during the Second World War. This is good, meaty stuff.

"Band of Brothers," however, was a book before it was a miniseries. (It still is, of course, and is currently climbing up the New York Times' nonfiction bestselling list.) Its full title is "Band of Brothers: E Company, 506th Regiment, 101st Airborne: From Normandy to Hitler's Eagle's Nest."

We must confess that we picked up the book because we were first interested in the miniseries. However, after the first few pages, we were goners for the book itself. This, after all, is the material on which the miniseries is based.

Written by Stephen E. Ambrose, the bestselling author famous for his biographies of Eisenhower and Nixon, "Band of Brothers" is the history of E (Easy) Company, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, from basic training to the capture of Hitler's aerie.

Fascinating

This book then is a military history, but unlike others of its kind that deal mostly with the grand strategies of generals, "Band of Brothers" is told from the viewpoint of the front line soldier. That is what makes it so fascinating. Ambrose himself explains in his new foreword in the Touchstone edition (published by Simon & Schuster):

"[T]here are hundreds, indeed thousands, of books on World War II. What they (Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks) liked about 'Band of Brothers' was its scope—almost the whole of the campaign in Northwestern Europe—but even more, the concentration on one outstanding light infantry company and the personalities and actions of the men . . .

"The war was so big, with so many characters and outstanding—and not so outstanding—generals and statesmen that people grow weary of reading about Dwight Eisenhower and the Supreme Command, or Franklin Roosevelt and his high command, or the strategy of the war.

"What they seek is the experience of the individual soldier or sailor or airman. They want to know: What did he do? How could he have done that? They read for entertainment, of course, and enlightenment, but also, and perhaps most of all, for inspiration."

Basic training

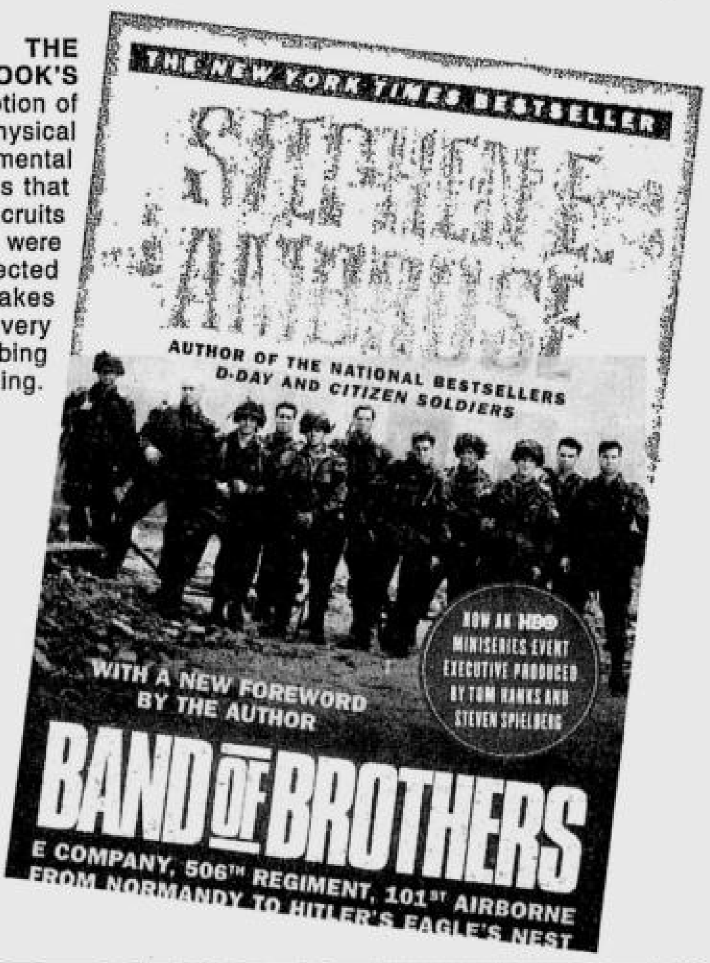
The book begins with basic training in Camp Toccoa in the summer of 1942, when the Second Battalion of the 506th was formed. The men came from all over America, from different walks of life—"They were farmers and coal miners, mountain men and sons of the Deep South. Some were desperately poor, others from the middle class. One came from Harvard, one from Yale, a couple from UCLA. Only one was from the Old Army, only a few came form the National Guard or Reserves. They were citizen soldiers."

These men volunteered for the paratroopers for the thrill, the honor, the monthly bonus, and more importantly, the desire to be better than the ordinary draftee and because they "wanted to look up to the guy beside them, not down."

Ambrose gives a detailed account of the company's first two years (the whole book itself is highly detailed, as a matter of fact), their training precombat period. His description of the strenuous physical and mental stress that the recruits were subjected to makes for very absorbing reading.

It made for very interesting watching, too when it was brought to life on the screen. David Schwimmer played Capt. Herbert Sobel, the "chickenshit" C.O. of Easy company, arrogant, cruel, and a petty tyrant. Schwimmer got him down to a T, his foul-ups as Sobel were quite entertaining. ***(To be concluded.)***

THE BOOK'S description of the physical and mental stress that the recruits were subjected to makes for very absorbing reading.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BAND OF BROTHERS
E COMPANY, 506TH REGIMENT, 101ST AIRBORNE
FROM NORMANDY TO HITLER'S EAGLE'S NEST

Frank Oz pulls the strings for Brando, Norton, De Niro

By Mark Kennedy

IN front of Frank Oz was every movie director's greatest longing—and even deeper fear. There stood Marlon Brando, Robert de Niro and Edward Norton, perhaps the three greatest actors of their respective generations—representing four Academy Award wins and a dozen other Oscar nominations.

Former puppeteer

And there stood Oz—a former puppeteer, supplier of funny Muppet voices and maker of frothy comedies—directing his first drama.

Or was he directing history? (Brando and De Niro—the young and old Vito Corleone from the Godfather and the "Godfather Part 11" respectively—are doing scenes together for the first time.)

"It is thrilling, says Oz. "But I can't see it that way. If I did, I'm in the wrong business. I mean, no work's going to get done, nothing's going to come alive."

"Maybe in about five years from now, I'll look and say, "Holy cow! I directed Marlon Brando and Rob de Niro! But that's not what you do on the set. What you do is you do your job and try and get that fertile ground."

Oz offers the result the "The Score," a thriller about three thieves who plot to steal a priceless golden scepter from the fortress like customs house in Montreal.

Treachery

Brando plays the debonair, old-school Max who unites De Niro's cool, jazz-loving Nick with Norton's character, an upstart cat burglar named Jackie. The plot reekes of tension, treachery, and ego.

"Before we started the movie, Edward and Bob and I and Marlon were totally aware it was not just about these three different actors and generations," says Oz.

And three potential headaches.

None have reputation as blushing violets when it comes to offering advice on everything from scripts to shooting schedules.

"It was not an easy shoot," concedes Oz. 56. "Marlon and I did not particularly get along very well at the end of the day, not because he was difficult, but because it was a difficult situation."

"There are sometimes creative differences. Not with Bob so much, but Marlon certainly and sometimes Edward. And that's OK. That's what rehearsals are for. That's what conflicts are there for—in order to create something on screen."

Oz might seem like the perfect man for the job: He is, after all, a puppeteer trained to completely control his performers, including such favorites as Fozzie Bear, Grover and Miss Piggy.

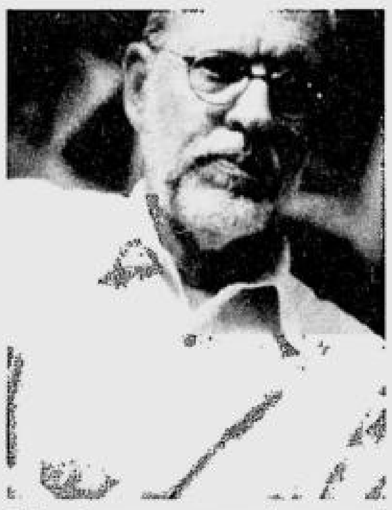
Oz. though, doesn't like the analogy.

Creative control

"I've always thought having creative control is an oxymoron. How can you control creativity?" he asks.

For his part, Oz's creativity has steadily increased since he picked up his first puppet. A child with low self-esteem, Oz grew to appreciate the fuzzy toys as a middleman to the outside world.

"As a kid who was self-effacing and shy, it was a good conduit without showing myself. And then eventually I didn't need to do that anymore and became myself." He says.



OZ. Former puppeteer and supplier of funny Muppet voices now directs three of the movie world's best actors in a single film.

Working with Jim Henson's troupe for television's Sesame Street and then "The Muppet Show," Oz helped make the "The Muppet Movie," co-directed "The Dark Crystal" with Henson, and directed "The Muppets Take Manhattan."

Besides Muppets, Oz has voiced Yoda in the "Star Wars" movies and made cameo appearances in John Landis' "The Blues Brothers," "Trading Places" and "An American Werewolf in London."

"I think it's very good for a director to once in a while get in front of a camera and know sheer terror," he explains.

Oz directed "Little Shop of Horrors"— which featured the vracrious puppet Audrey KK—and then left such playthings behind at the helm of "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels," "What About Bob?", "The Indian in the Cupboard," "In & Out," and "Bowfinger."

That's when he was asked to direct "The Score"—basically being asked to tell the stars of such films as "On The Waterfront," "Raging Bull," and "Primal Fear" what to do.

"I didn't see nervousness," says co-producer Gary Foster, who often stopped by the set. "I'm sure he too had to be —I would have been—but he handled it very calmly."

Chemistry

Oz says the nervousness came before shooting. "Truth is, when you cast them, you cast them individually. When they get on the set, who knows if it will work out? Maybe the chemistry is terrible. Maybe they don't connect. Maybe they don't like the smell of each other," he says.

"You really don't know. Just because they're incredible actors doesn't mean they will work well together. So fortunately I heaved a sigh of relief when I saw things began clicking,"

He could then sit back and just let things happen. On the first day of shooting, for example, he let Brando experiment on several takes, then gingerly pulled him back to the script.

"I guess my biggest job is to keep my eyes on the prize, which is the story and the characters. So if they veer off—and I want them to improve and ad-lib—I'm the guy that's got to kind of bring them back inside the envelope."

Now comes one last fear—"other people's expectations of it being so extraordinary because you have these actors."

"It's always a problem when you get people together that are thought of so highly," Oz says. "I just pushed those expectations away."

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ALLEN. Sharp storyline; muddled performance.

‘The Curse of The Jade Scorpion’ is only intermittently entertaining

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—"The Curse of the Jade Scorpion" boasts one of Woody Allen's more clever comic premises, which makes for a mild disappointment when the movie proves only intermittently entertaining.

Prewar setting

Along with the sharp storyline, the ingredients are here for a top-notch Allen comedy: A prewar setting he's mined well in the past. A cast with a promising mix of Allen newcomers and veterans. Great jazz tunes snazzily integrated into the action.

But the whole of "Jade Scorpion" somehow is less than the sum of its parts. Allen's performance is muddied by a clumsy blend of his usual neurotic persona and 1930s chauvinism, while the chemistry among the cast often feels stiff and forced.

The result is a scattering of humorous peaks surrounded by long sequences that range from tolerably pleasant to downright unfunny.

"Jade Scorpion" is the second in a series of lighter films based on comic ideas Allen's had kicking around in a drawer for a while.

Instead of a bumbling bank thief who lucks into a fortune in last year's "Small Time Crooks," this time Allen plays CW Briggs, a bumbling insurance investigator who lucks into solutions on fraud cases.

Efficiency expert

Set in 1940, the movie pits the womanizing CW against his firm's new efficiency expert, Betty Ann Fitzgerald, played by Helen Hunt, doing a more hard-nosed take on her role as the female boss battling a sexist pig in "What Women Want."

CW trades endless barbs with Betty Ann, who threatens to shut down the insurance agency's investigative unit and farm the work out to private detectives.

"You're possibly divorced or widowed, or your husband committed suicide. I could understand that," CW tells Betty Ann. She hurls back epithets: "slimy little weasel," "you roach," "mealy-mouthed little reptile," "snoopy little termite."

Dan Aykroyd co-stars as the agency's boss and Betty Ann's married lover. Rounding out the insurance crew are Elizabeth Berkley as a sweet-natured office bombshell and Allen vets Wallace Shawn and Brian Markinson as CW's buddies.

The movie features two other past Allen collaborators. Charlize Theron plays the sort of spoiled rich girl Allen hero Humphrey Bogart always bumped into on cases. David Ogden Stiers co-stars as Voltan, a magician who sets the crime caper in motion.

During an office dinner party, Voltan hypnotizes CW and Betty Ann, forcing them to play-act as loving honeymooners. Voltan leaves behind post-hypnotic command words so he can use them later to pull off jewel heists in mansions CW has burgle-proofed.

That puts CW on the case, oblivious to the fact that the thief he's trying to catch is himself.

Broad strokes

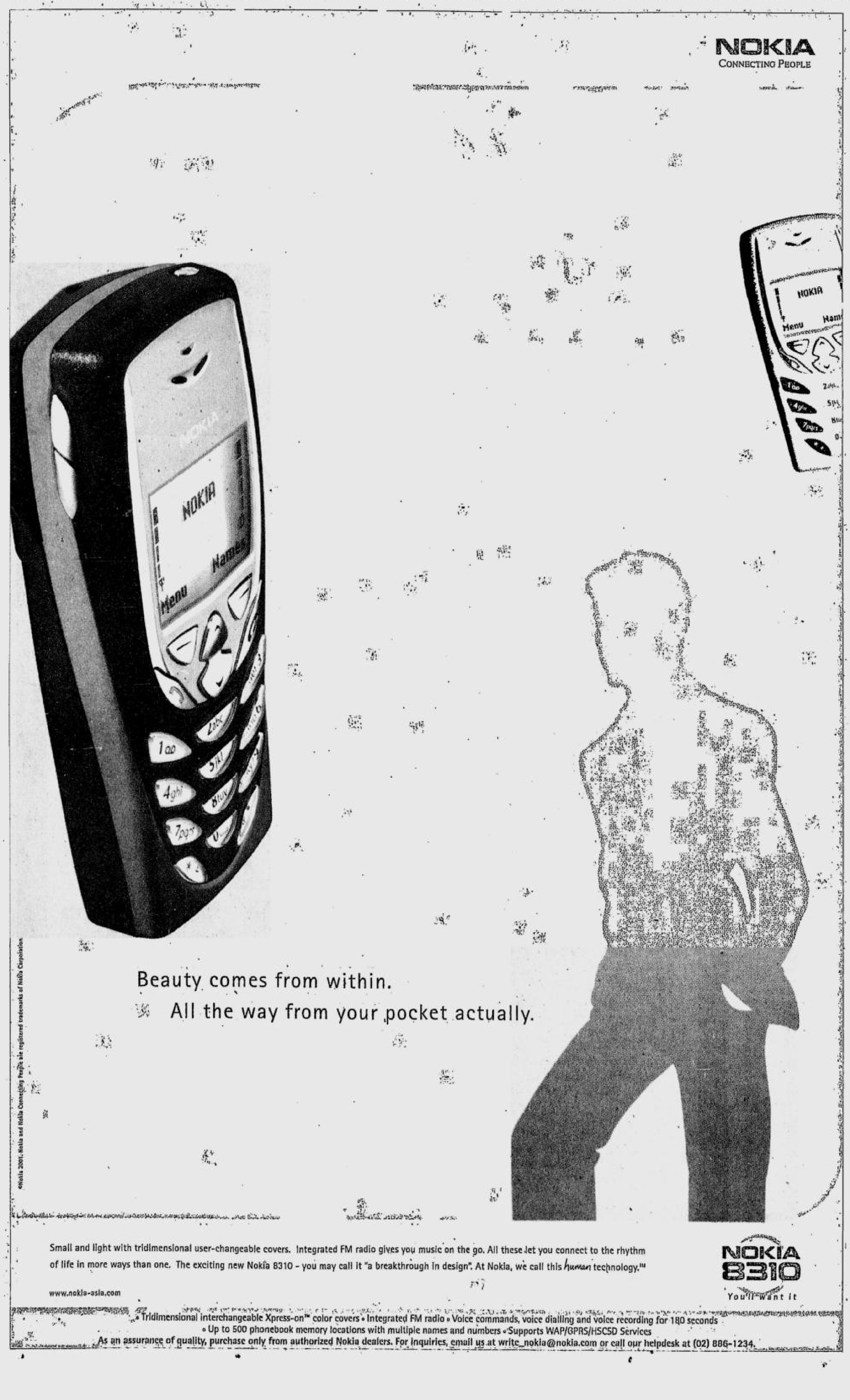
The plot sounds delightful in broad strokes. The movie stumbles in the details, though.

The repartee is uneven, a handful of zingers mixing with too many throwaway lines. Most of the supporting cast is left too far in the background to feel like more than bit players.

With his resonant voice, Stiers alone emerges to grab the audience's interest in his brief screen time.

Hunt is very earnest, but her comic talents seem too refined for Allen's blunt, lowbrow exchanges. Allen has had better rapport with other recent leading ladies such as Tracey Ullman and Mira Sorvino.

The movie does acknowledge a criticism often aimed at Allen's movies about his characters' relationships with gorgeous, much younger women. At one point, Betty Ann barks that CW is too old, short and nearsighted for her. *AP*



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‘Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back’ is a road movie that goes nowhere

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—Kevin Smith doesn't aim to entertain with "Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back" so much as reward his fans for their loyalty.

Movie geek

If you're one of them, you can sit smugly in the audience, knowing that you're laughing because you're in on the joke. You're a movie geek—you rule, dude.

To achieve this cinematic nirvana, you need to have seen all of Smith's earlier movies—"Clerks," "Mallrats," "Chasing Amy" and "Dogma"—and know specific details about them. You also need to be familiar with—if not a devout fan of—the other movies and TV shows Smith deems important, including "American Pie," "Scream" and "Dawson's Creek."

Being a comic book geek isn't an absolute necessity, but it helps.

As writer, director and co-star, Smith offers a road movie that goes nowhere, a script that's merely a laundry list of pop-culture phenomena—not that the members of his cultlike following care. A few sporadic moments are good for a laugh, but you've got to slog through a sea of fart jokes and graphic descriptions of nasty sex acts to get to them.

Small parts

But what else would you expect from Jay (Jason Mewes), a stoner who stands outside a New Jersey convenience store all day accosting customers, and Silent Bob (Smith), his mute "heterosexual life partner?" The characters Smith created, who had small parts in his earlier movies, must carry the whole thing here. Whoa.

Jay and Silent Bob find out that Miramax (which owns Dimension Films, which is releasing this movie) is making a movie about the comic book characters based on them named Bluntman and Chronic. They find a flurry of postings on online message boards from movie geeks, spouting off about how talentless Jay and Silent Bob are.

> A few sporadic moments are good for a laugh

Jay and Silent Bob become furious. Never mind that they're not getting a cent for the movie. They're being besmirched on the Internet—which they didn't even know existed. So they must trek to Hollywood, stop the movie from being made and salvage their good names. Besides, there are hot chicks in L.A.

On the way, they run into a group of bad girl diamond thieves, an orangutan, a clueless wildlife officer and Carrie Fisher in a nun get-up. There's also a parade of cameos from everyone who's ever appeared in one of Smith's movies, including George Carlin, Joey Lauren Adams, Jason Lee, Chris Rock and Brian Christopher O'Halloran (convenience store czar Dante from "Clerks.") It's a gratuitous who's who of his buddies, nothing more.

Sequel

One of the few truly funny scenes takes place toward the end, when Jay and Silent Bob finally make it to Hollywood and wander onto the set of "Good Will Hunting" sequel.

Matt Damon and Smith regular Ben Affleck play exaggerated versions of themselves, trading insults about each other's career choices. (Again, you need to have seen all of Damon's and Affleck's movies to get the joke.) But it's fun watching these longtime friends play off each other so effortlessly—and at the same time, sad to realize how many lousy movies they've made since their Oscar-winning "Good Will Hunting" four years ago.

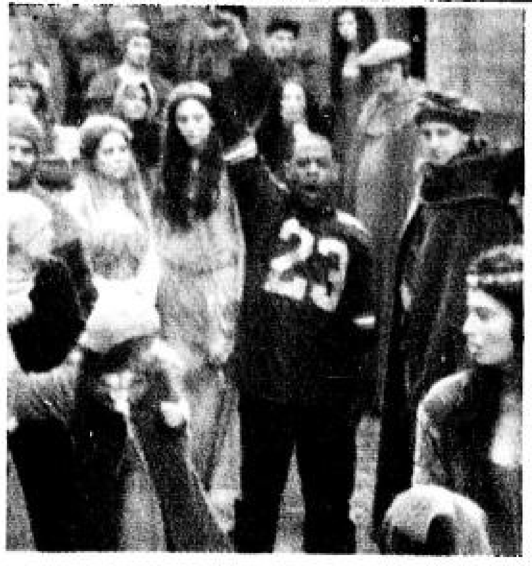
Smith promises this is the big finale for Jay and Silent Bob.

"It's time to put 'em away," he says.

And it's long overdue. They were funny when "Clerks" came out in 1994, and only then in small doses.

"Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back" runs 99 minutes. *AP*

Saturday SPECIAL



LAWRENCE. Goofy physical comedy.

Martin Lawrence sticks to slapstick in 'Black Knight'

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—Catapult Martin Lawrence back in time six centuries or so to the age of knights.

POOF!

A ready-to-serve comedy about a bad boy street jester going medieval.

Like Huck Finn, we've been there before, namely in Huck creator Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

Dark satire

Twain's book, while funny and somewhat slapstick, was a rather dark satire on class distinctions, economics and the dangers of technology, with a tragic love story to boot.

Lawrence's "Black Knight" sticks to slapstick, and reasonably often, to passable humor. Fans of his goofy physical comedy and wisenheimer attitude will eat this movie up. Lawrence is mouthy, klutzy, randy and rude, but his character's sweet and decent at heart.

"Black Knight" will prove a bit grating for the Lawrence-intolerant, however. His bleeps and moans and exclamations during morning grooming rituals grow tiresome about 30 seconds into the film, though Lawrence thankfully tones down the inarticulate noises after that.

Indifferent employee

Lawrence plays Jamal Walker, an indifferent employee of Medieval World, a run-down theme park in Los Angeles. Assigned to clean the moat, Jamal topples in while reaching for what appears to be a valuable pendant in the water.

He pops out in a lake in Britain in the 14th century. The film doesn't bother explaining how Jamal got there, but that's not necessarily a drawback; Twain never

MARTIN/p.12

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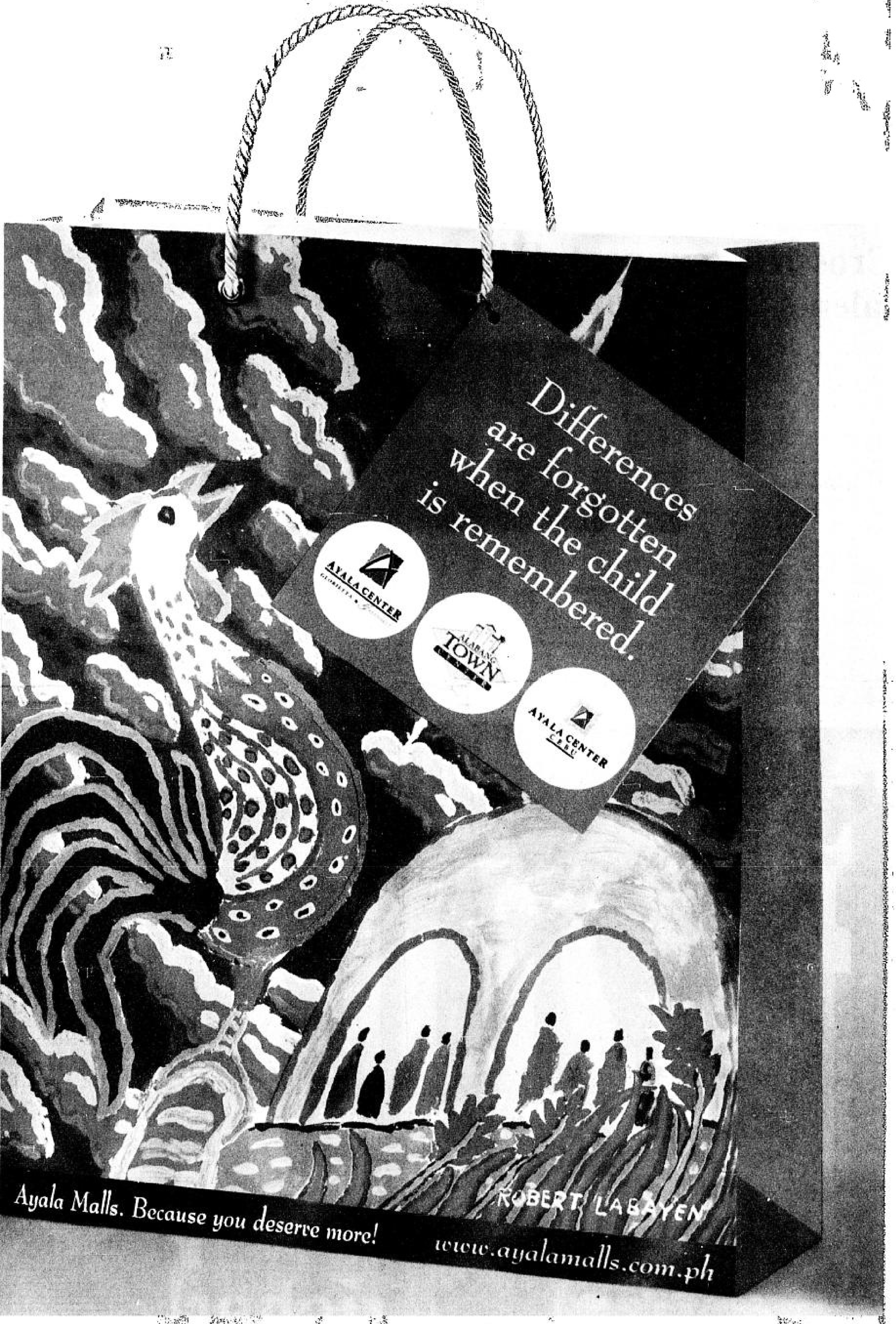
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Sampaguita–from 'Bonggahan' queen to Grandmother Willow

By Mona Gonzales

"MY daughter Jacinta suggested we hold the interview here," Sampaguita, *the* rock star of the '80s, tells me over luscious mango cheese tart, tea, et al. at Conti's, a delicious bakeshop in Parañaque.

Famous

Sampaguita is famous for the songs "Bonggahan," "Tao" and "Nosi Ba Lasi," to name a few. In fact, even today many consider "Bonggahan" to be the signature song of Pinoy rock. And Sampaguita (some used to call her "Sampy," but these days she's "Sam" for short) has attained "icon" status in the local music scene—the first recognized woman rocker, and the penultimate Pinoy flower child, to boot.

These days she is collaborating with Ivory Records to release the "Legends Series," a compilation of her greatest hits. You may have also seen her recently on the telly, singing with Rosanna Roces.

La Vida Rosa had said it had always been her dream to do a duet with the Rock Legend. Sam says she's honored and adds, "the admiration is mutual! Rosanna is very nice and real—a rocker at heart."

In fact many young women (like Rosanna) appreciate the persona of Sampaguita, who had always been identified with freedom, and a sense of being carefree. This touched a chord (and continues to) with all types of people who up until now still get excited at the sight of her.

Fondly remembered

She is still fondly remembered by men, women, and kids (including my 10-year-old daughter and her best friend, who love "Bonggahan"). To that checklist, Sam humorously adds, "*Bakla*, crazy and *matanda*."

And what can she say of the new stars today? She replies, "They're all my babies—they are Pinoy Rock's children! But I notice that today they're more into bands, whereas in my time, there were more solo artists.

"I also think that visually, artists in my time had more to look at. Rock was fashion and glamour. We had gear, costumes, boots, fringes, make-up. Joey (Smith) could perform with green hair, wings and a cape. In one concert he even had safety pins stuck into his cheeks—Now, they can wake up and sing looking just like that!"

SAMPAGUITA. A journey of changes.

Cowboy (her son, also a rock musician) on the other hand is more deeply rooted in the rock and roll of Sam's time. He plays lead guitar and sessions for a blues band called the Blue Rats. Does Cowboy ask her for musical advice? Sam proudly replies, "He doesn't need to. He knows what's up! He's alright, he can find his way."

Sam may have always been unconventional, but she has never stopped being consistent. Her 13-year-old daughter, Jacinta said her mother loves proverbs, and to our surprise, Jacinta recited the very same proverbs that Sam gave me when I interviewed her 20 years before!

Younger version

Jacinta is a beautiful younger version of her mother (whom everyone recalls was a real stunner during her rocker days), but fairer-skinned. She says her mother is "lots of fun," and she simply loves being with her.

As a parent, Sam says, "I'm not trying to be anyone—not even a parent, I'm just me." She adds that she would rather not decide for her kids, because "you'll just end up fighting."

She would however, give her opinion and explain why she thinks one course of action is better than another, but the child ultimately decides. She adds that she believes that, after God's love, the love between a mother and child is the purest love there is.

Her other daughter, Dolly, her eldest, is now 33 years old and based in Honolulu, Hawaii. Dolly, she says, is her serious child. Cowboy is funny, while Jacinta, is "loving, caring." Then she adds, "I'm a grandmother now!" The rock legend has truly evolved.

"The Sampaguita thing never really got to my head," she says. "If you look at my house, you won't see any pictures on the wall or mementos of those days." But what remains unchanged is her heart.

These days, she says, a lot of her time is spent talking to innumerable friends who call her for advice, "even the friends of Cowboy." In fact, she adds, Cowboy calls her "Grandmother Willow," the wise old oak tree in the Disney movie., "Pocahontas."

Painting

From Sampaguita to Grandmother Willow? Hmmm. She also spends a lot of time painting. She likes working with oil pastels, but may also go into watercolor. Her subject matter? Fish, flowers, "whatever my teacher gives me as subject" she says laughing. She would also like to paint clay pots for plants.

And she is very much into education—but in a more practical sense. "I'd like to have a school where I could teach what I've learned. It would be a vocational school where I could teach crafts, ceramics, etc."

Has she ever tried composing new songs? Sam says she has wanted to write about two of her former band members who had passed away—Edmond Fortuno, her drummer of 25 years, and Miyakee, her guitarist of 19 years. However, the wounds are still freshly felt, and she feels she needs more time to heal.

Life has truly been a journey of changes for Sam, who has let go of her vices—smoking, drugs, drinking and partying. She has gained some weight because of a thyroid ailment, but she has never lost her childlike spirit and her knack for staying happy.

Even as Grandmother Willow, she is still the "Bonggahan" queen!

Crossover supports Filipino talents in new compilation album

THE VIVA Music Group and the Marco Broadcasting Network Inc., have announced the release of the album "Closer to Home 2." A joint undertaking between Viva Records and radio station Crossover 105.1, the all-star collection once more combines Crossover's brand of music together with some of the best talents in the country.

Featured songs

The songs featured in "Closer to Home 2" are "Doors" by Sharon Cuneta; "I Don't Wanna Miss a Thing' by Regine Velasquez; "I Can Let Go Now" by Jaya; "Love is Here" by Freestyle; "Neither one of Us" by Lani Misalucha; "As If We Never Said Goodbye" by Marco Sison; "Shower the People" by Zsa Zsa Padilla "Forget 2 Forget" by Janno Gibbs; "Don't Give Up on Us Baby" by Kuh Ledesma; "Light and Shade" by Wiseguys; "For Everything" by Rachel Alejandro; "Fallin" by Pops Fernandez; and "Someone's Waiting for You" by Donna Cruz.

FROM left, Zonta's Mylene Sarza and Maria Morris, Crossover's Ronnie de Asis, Viva Records' Guia Gil Ferrer and Rene Salta.

New composition

Recorded expressly for the album is the Mon Espia original "Into Your Groove" by Seven. This group formed to record this new composition for "Closer to Home 2," is made up of Wendell Garcia on drums, Rommel de la Cruz on bass, Mon Espia on guitars, Elmhir Saison on keyboards, Ike Dy Liaco on sax, Ruel Cabrera on fugel horn and Judith Alegarbes on vocals.

Aside from celebrating Crossover's commitment to Filipino artists, "Closer to Home 2" also stands to benefit the street children of Pasig. Part of the proceeds from the sales of the album will be donated to the Zonta Club of Metro Pasig.

Classical encounters of a different kind at Giorgio's

AT 8 tonight, classical encounters of a different kind await music lovers at the trendy Stars of Giorgio bistro (Priscilla 100 bldg., Pasong Tamo ext.). The Class Act will present noted classical artist Josephine Roces Chavez and rising musical star Lana Jalosjos, who played the female lead role (after Rachel Alejándro's stint) in the Singapore production of "Rent."

Josie and Lana will sing such classic favorite duets and solos as: "Barcarole" from "Tales of Hoffman", "It's De-Lovely" from "Red, Hot and Blue", "Memory" from "Cats," "A Boy Like That" and "Somewhere," from "West Side Story"; "Till There Was You", from "The Music Man"; and "They Can't Take That Away From Me" from "Shall We Dance."

Mary Ann Baclao is accompanying pianist, artist restaurateur George Sison is the producer and Chola Navarro is the artistic director. Call 816-7520.

ROCES. Teams up with Lana Jalosjos.

Martin Lawrence . . .

(From page I1)

spelled out how a conk on the head sent his 19th century Yankee back to Camelot, either.

Jamal encounters Sir Knolte (Tom Wilkinson), a knight fallen on hard times who's so scruffy and stinky our hero mistakes him for a homeless man, suggesting he dress up his woodsy quarters with cheap furniture from Ikea.

"You'll be styling," Jamal tells the baffled Knolte.

Soon after, Jamal enters the court of bad King Leo (Kevin Conway), who has usurped the queen's throne with help from his vile henchman, Percival (Vincent Regan). Enchanted by the royal maiden Victoria (Marsha Thomason), Jamal gradually is drawn into a revolt against the king, teaching Knolte and other rebels modern street-fighting, boxing and football moves.

Tight pacing

Director Gil Junger's tight pacing rescues the movie from tumbling into bogs of boredom. Just as "Black Knight" grows sleepy, Junger and Lawrence kick it back up a notch with a cute sight gag here or an amusing play on King's English vs. 'hood lingo there.

A highlight: Jamal instructing royal musicians on how to get down to riffs and refrains from "Mustang Sally" and "Dance to the Music." It's far too reminiscent of this year's rock 'n' roll Middle Ages adventure "A Knight's Tale," but hey, it's funny. *AP*

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AM/FM

Bangkok on-air, onscreen and off

By Rito P. Asilo

FOR the next two weeks, we would like to share with you snippets of Thailand's film, music, and radio scenes—and more. We arrived in Bangkok just in time for the opening of the 4th Bangkok Film Festival (Nov. 16 to 25).

Cannes favorite

Much of the excitement among some 20,000 expected filmgoers and film buffs in attendance at the annual international festival was, in part, due to the highly anticipated screening of last year's Cannes' favorite, "In the Mood for Love," by Hongkong auteur, Wong Kar Wai, who further cemented his status as a hip film icon among the new wave of Asian directors with that film. Add to this the initial news that he was going to grace the opening of the film with lead star Tony Leung.

But, much to the disappointment of the festival organizers, both the director and Leung begged off at the last minute because the former was said to be rushing the principal photography of his latest opus.

Past winners of the four-year-old festival include Mohammed Ali Talebi's "Willow and Wind" from Iran, which won the Golden Elephant Award last year; Nonzee Nimibutr's "Nang Nak," the hugely popular Thai film about fate, mystic, ghosts and reincarnation, which was shown in last year's Cinemanila filmfest; South Korea's "A Petal," by Jang Sun-Woo and Argentina's "Moebius," by Gustavo Mosquera R., a film we caught at one of Manila's mushrooming foreign film exhibitions two years ago. It was curious to note the absence (or unsubstantial participation?) of entries from the Philippines, among a rich field of 70 from countries like Brazil, Egypt, France, Hong Kong, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Turkey, Taiwan, Germany, Norway, New Zealand, Yugoslavia and the United States.

Alternatives

We trust that next week's Cinemanila will feature truly remarkable films that will offer alternative choices to film buffs and prove that there is more to life than enjoyable but lightweight mainstream film fare like "Harry Potter" and "Lara Croft."

We did make sure to watch a Thai film, even without the English subtitles, because Southeast Asian films are hard to come by in Manila. So we watched "Krai Thong," which is the name of a Thai folkloric hero who hunts and kills mystical, magical crocodiles which plague riverborne villages, morph into sex-driven human forms, and haunt beautiful village women into erotic submission.

But while there was not much nudity, except for some breast exposure, there were some dismembered limbs, ears and heads.

It was eerie to watch the lead actor, whose name we later found out was Winai, because he looked like a combination of Cesar Montano and Emilio Garcia—but that's not to say that he looked better than either actor.

Crocodiles

Like "Nang Nak," a film which "resurrected" the Thai film industry from a three-films-a-year output to its present boomlet, (although we didn't particularly like it—a segment or two of some "Shake, Rattle and Roll" movies were definitely scarier—or funnier!), the visual quality of "Krai Thong" was crisp and clear.

But the crocodile shots were definitely as prehistoric as dinosaurs. It was a good thing, though, that the actors and actresses looked quite exotic, and very Filipino. We just kept snickering when the film ended with a scene of a young boy—with a crocodile tail protruding from his behind—playfully swimming by the riverbank, apparently a product of one of the hero's dalliances with his four wives—two common village lasses (who happen to be sisters) and two female crocodiles!

It sure would be pretty interesting to be there at the Pattaya International Film Festival on July 19 to 28 next year. We heard a number of Filipino films will be in exhibition.

Language barrier

Of course, we were curious how the music and radio scenes were in exotic Bangkok, but a major barrier was the language—Thais didn't speak English, except for the very basic words! So we had to learn Thai, too, to please our hosts, but we were usually met with amusement everytime we tried. We pictured ourselves as Japanese trying to speak Tagalog, so we understood the bemused reactions we got.

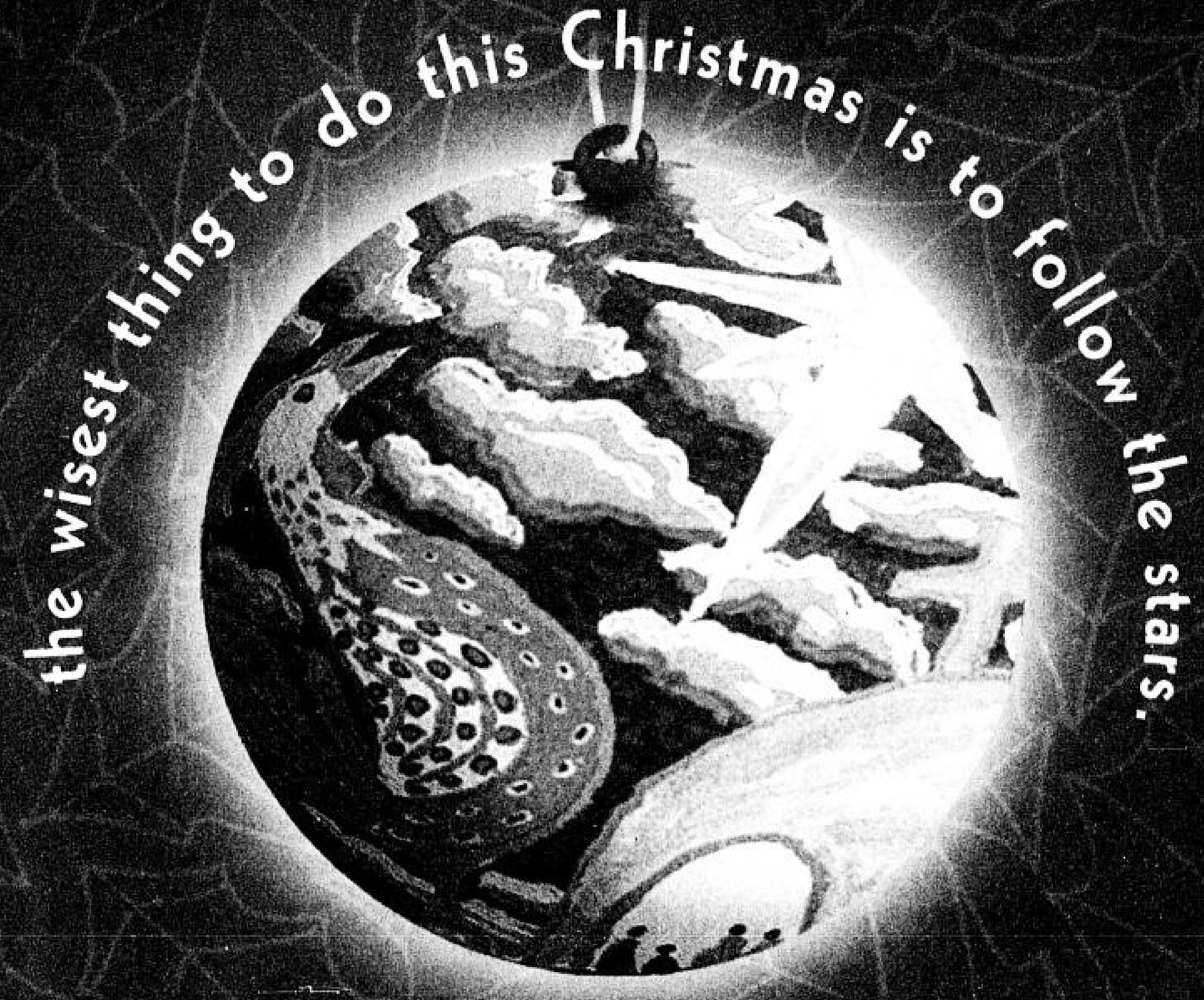
We had to convince taxi drivers and friendly shop owners to switch on their radios for us. We befriended those who spoke English to find out more about the radio industry there, what was popular, what type of music they liked.

Both hotels we stayed in for the duration of our trip didn't have radio, just cable TV with private pay-per-view channels that included a selection of, as the hotel guide suggested, "award-winning" porno films! We remembered pension houses in Davao with the same amenities for their clients—although they were free of charge.

Most radio stations, just like their television channels, were in Thai, though. But we did see VJ Belinda in an MTV show.

(Next week: Bangkok music and radio)

VJ BELINDA. Seen in an MTV show in Thailand.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DLSU Pop Orchestra - Dec. 21
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Vernie Varga & Katrina - Dec. 7, 5:30pm
Huni & Five Seasons - Dec. 8, 6pm

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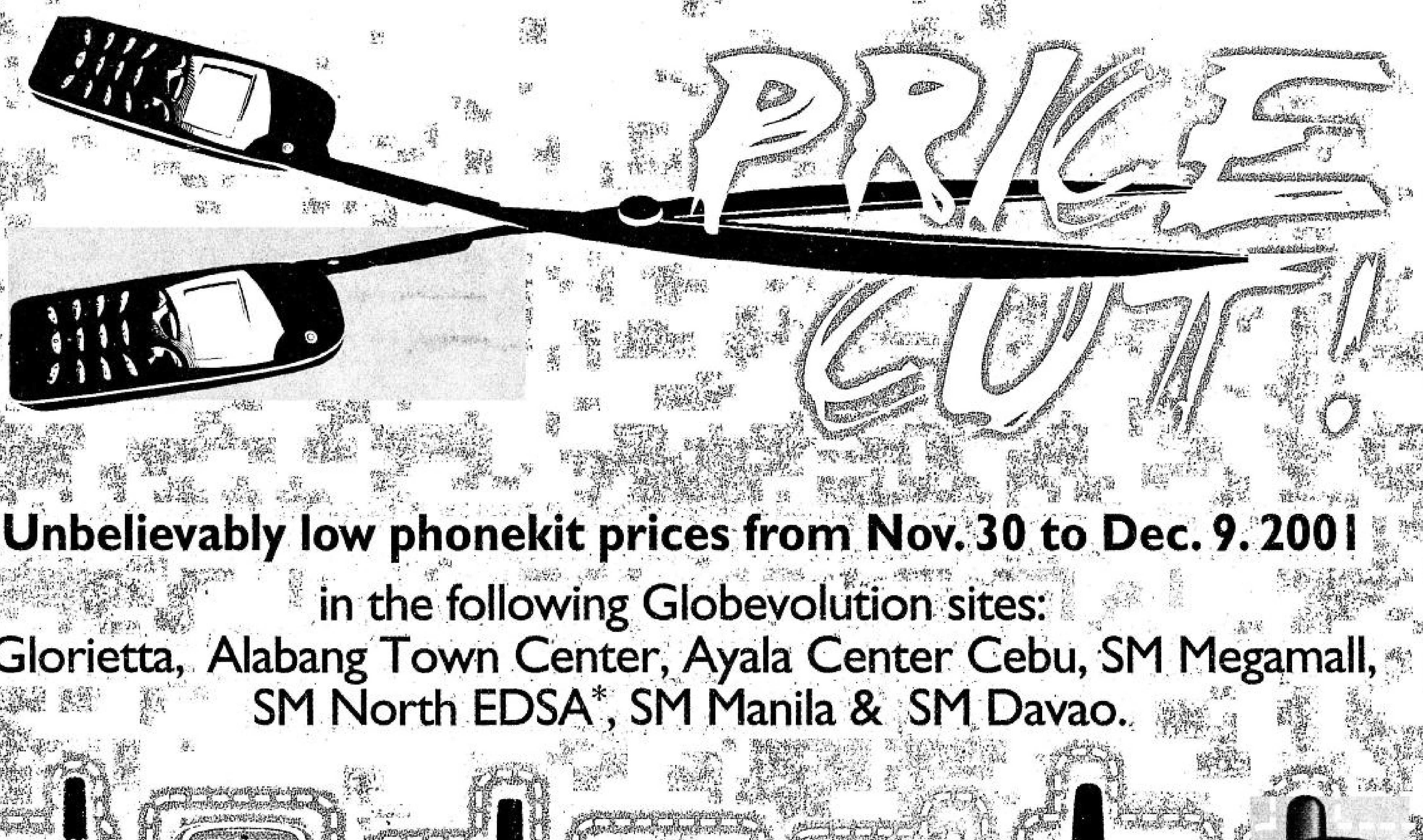

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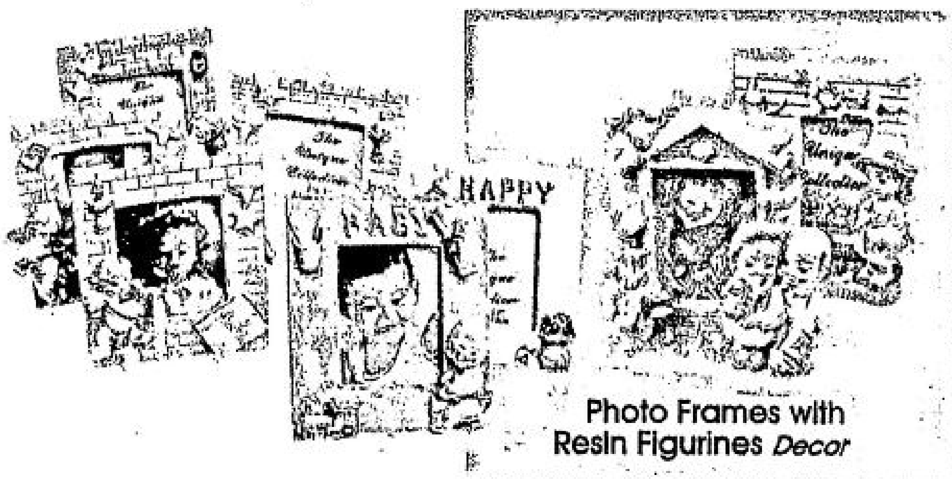

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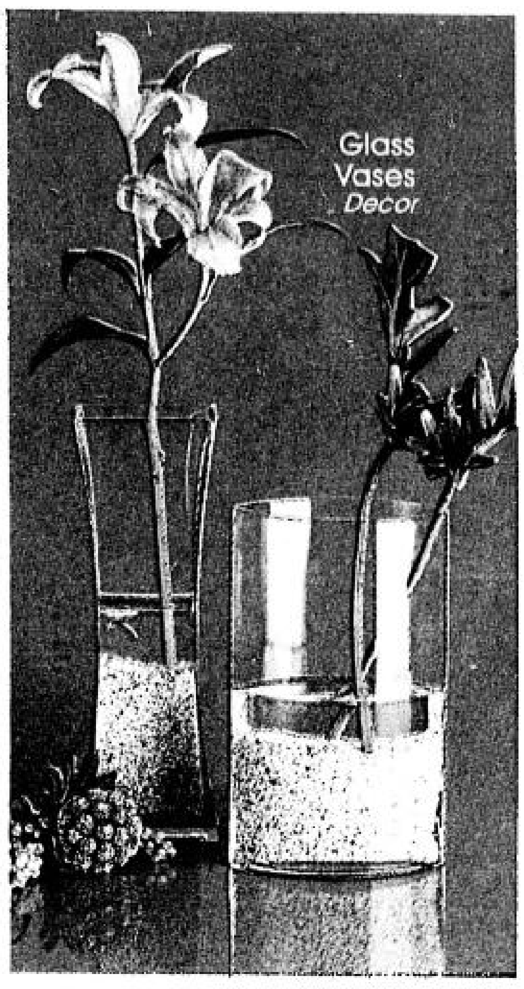

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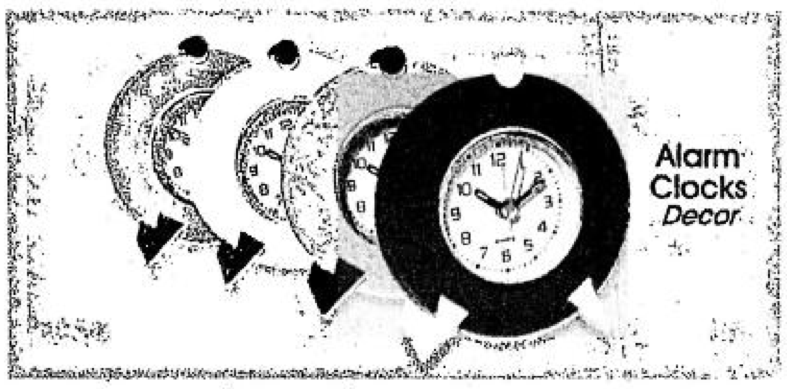

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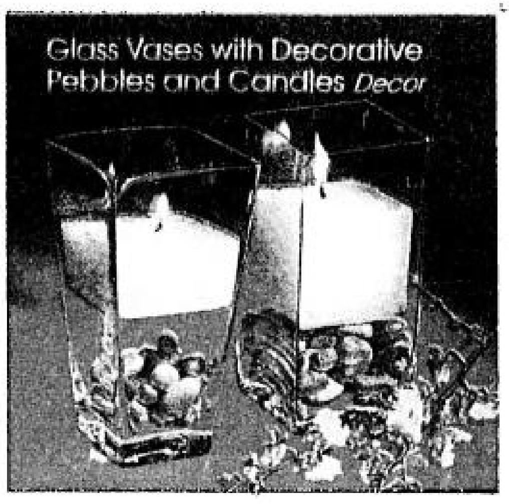

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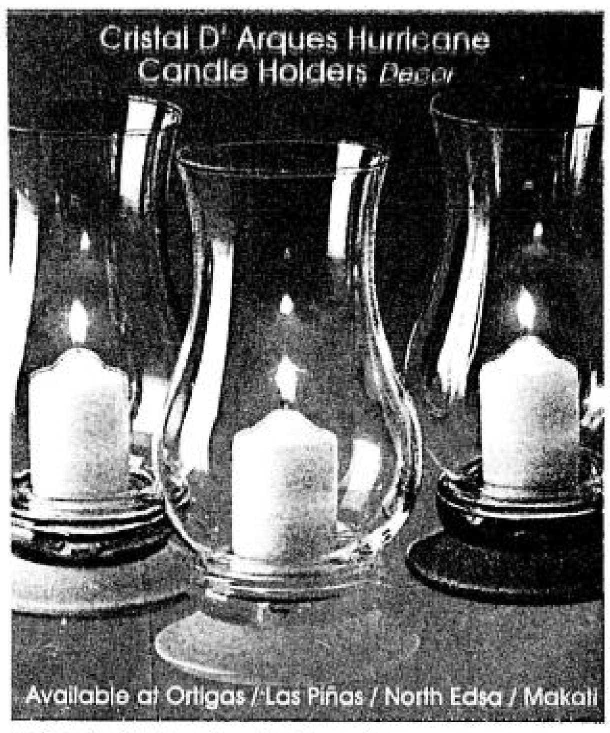

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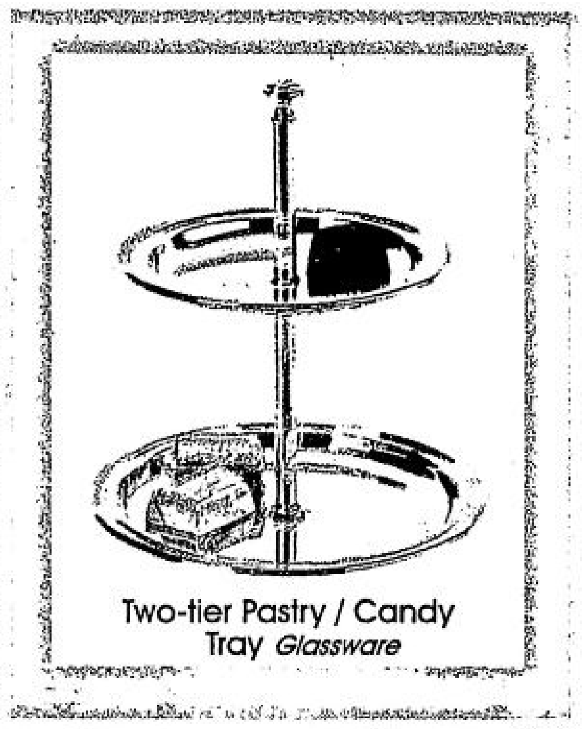

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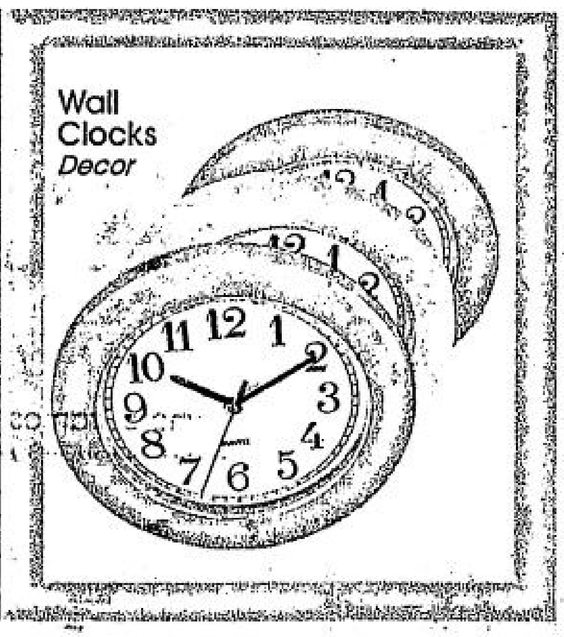
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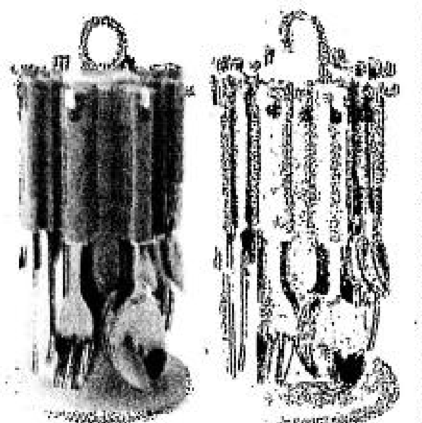
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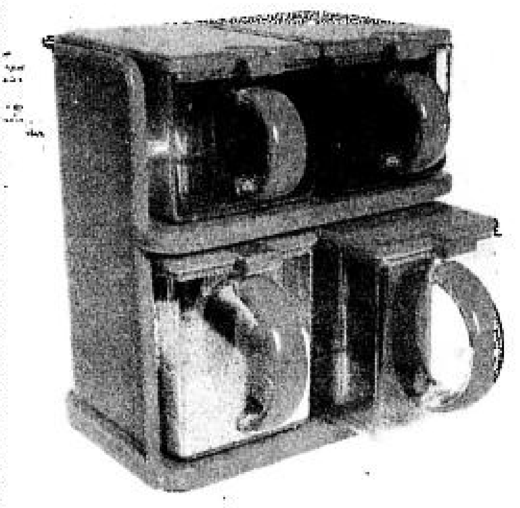
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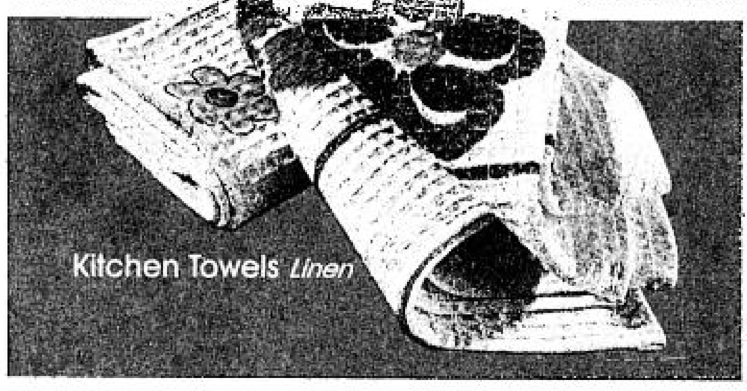
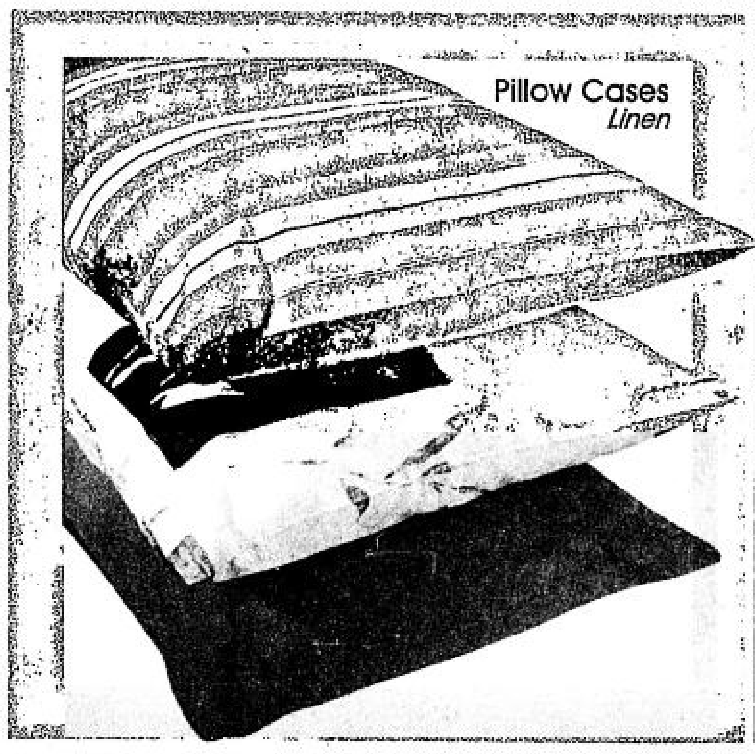

Kitchen Towels *Linen*

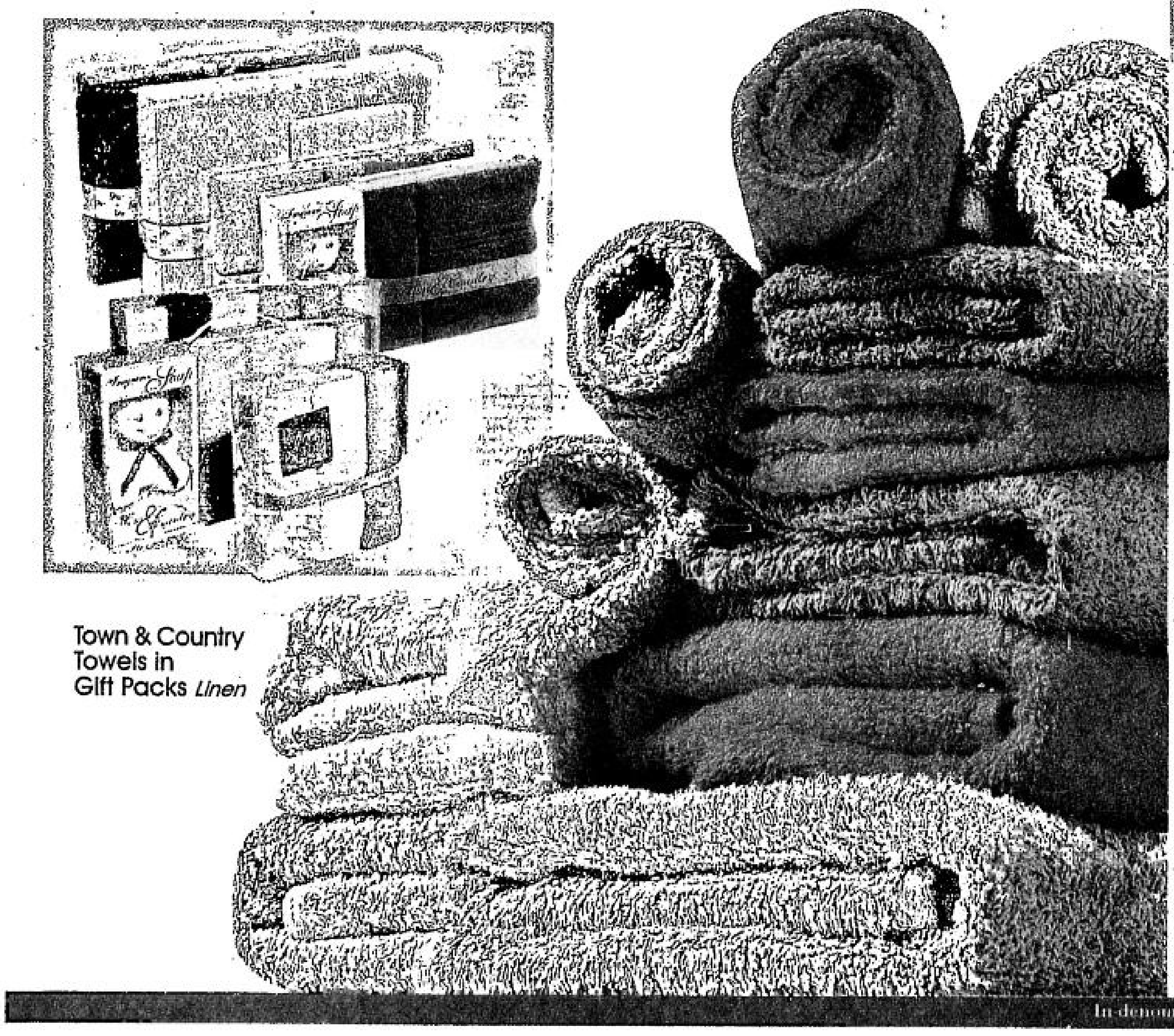
Functional solutions to holiday homemaking and beyond from the Linen, Decor, Glassware and Kitchenware Sections


Pillow Cases *Linen*

6-pc Bathroom Set in Pastel Colors *Plasticware*

Multi-purpose Baskets with Covered Containers *Plasticware*

Cup and Coaster Sets with Animal Prints in Tin Cans *Glassware*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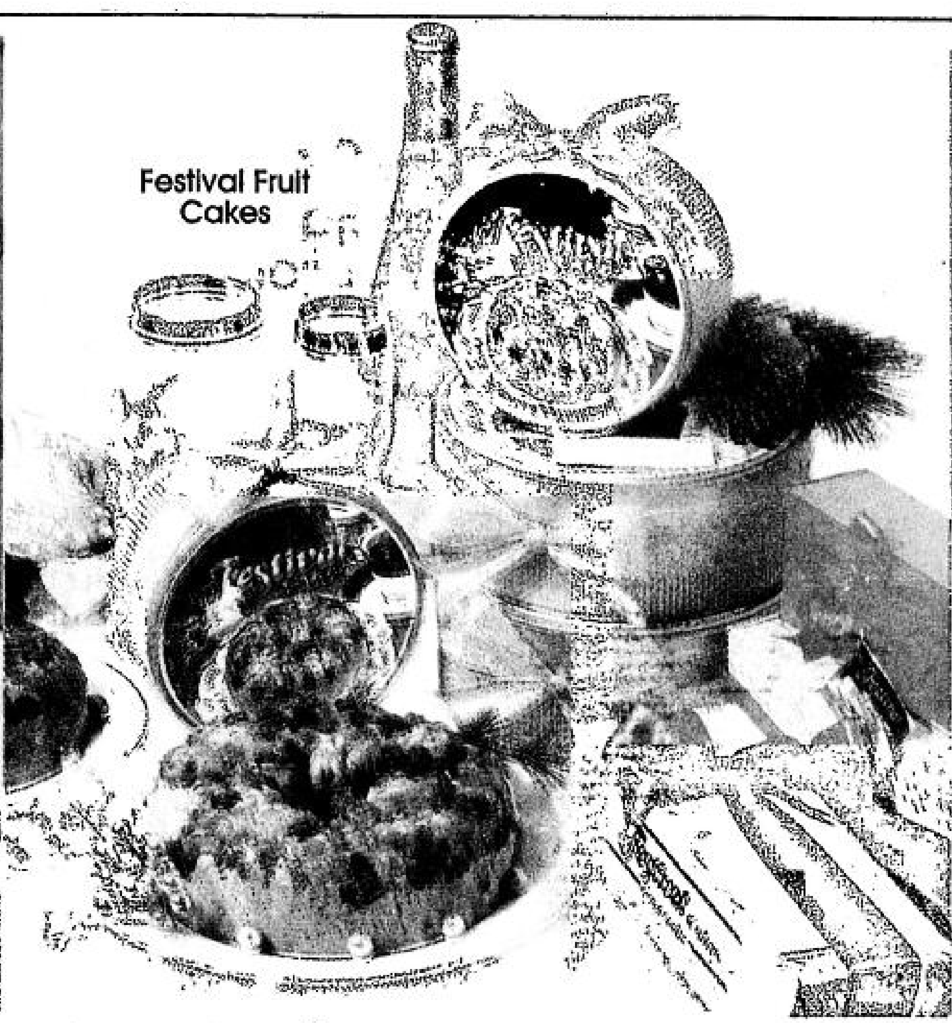
Christmas 2001

at the Snack Exchange



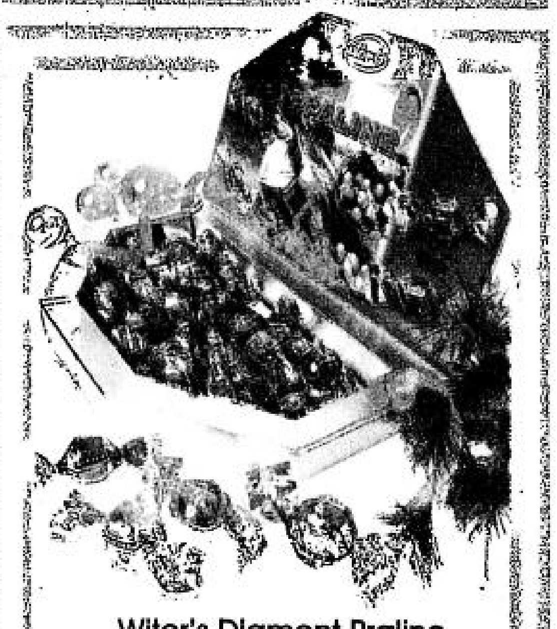
Festival Fruit Cakes

Ferrero Rocher Gift Packs

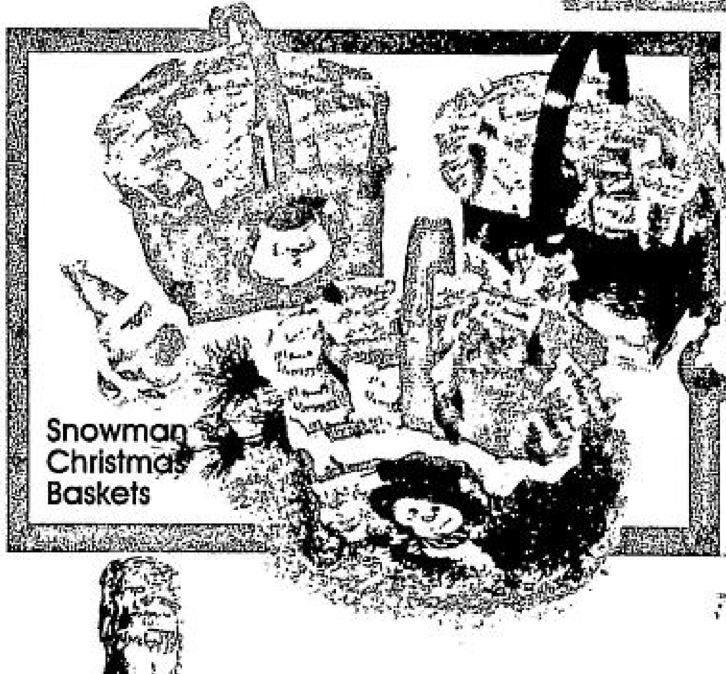
Witor's Cherry Liqueur Chocolates

Kenman's Premium Turkish Delights

Jacobsens Imported Danish Cookies

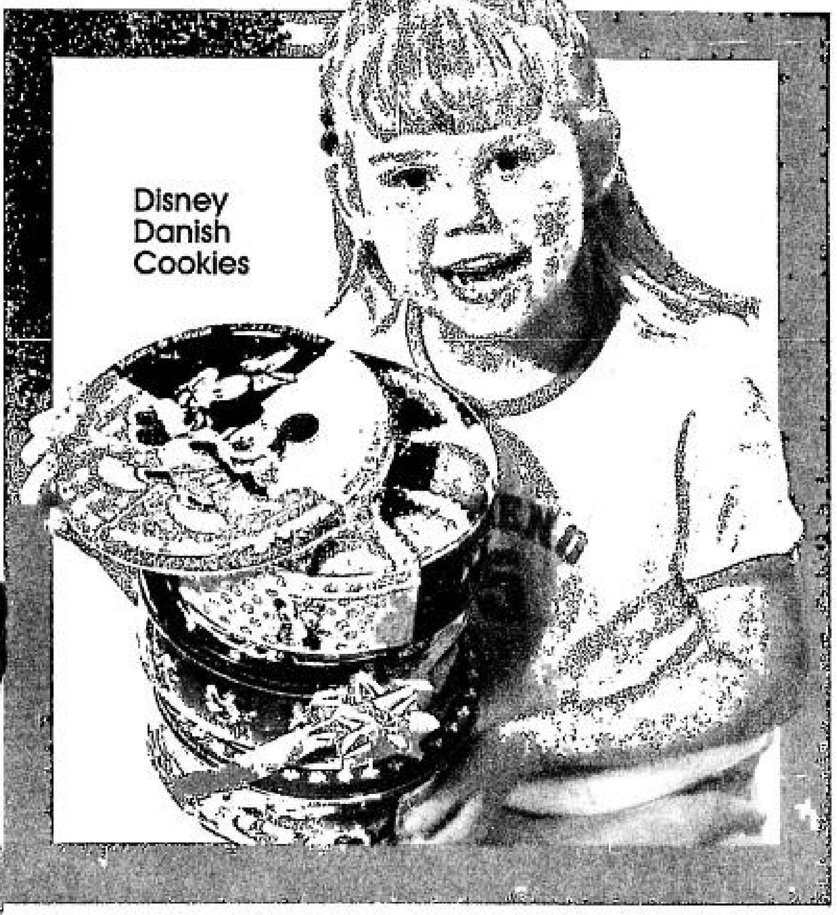


Witor's Diamont Praline Chocolates



Snowman Christmas Baskets

Sweet solutions to holiday snacking



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WHAT'S INSIDE:

Discovery in Egypt Page 2
NAMCYA News Page 3
What's in a Name? Page 5
Story: Why Sarah Doesn't Smile Page 6

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2001 ✦ 12 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 5, NUMBER 60
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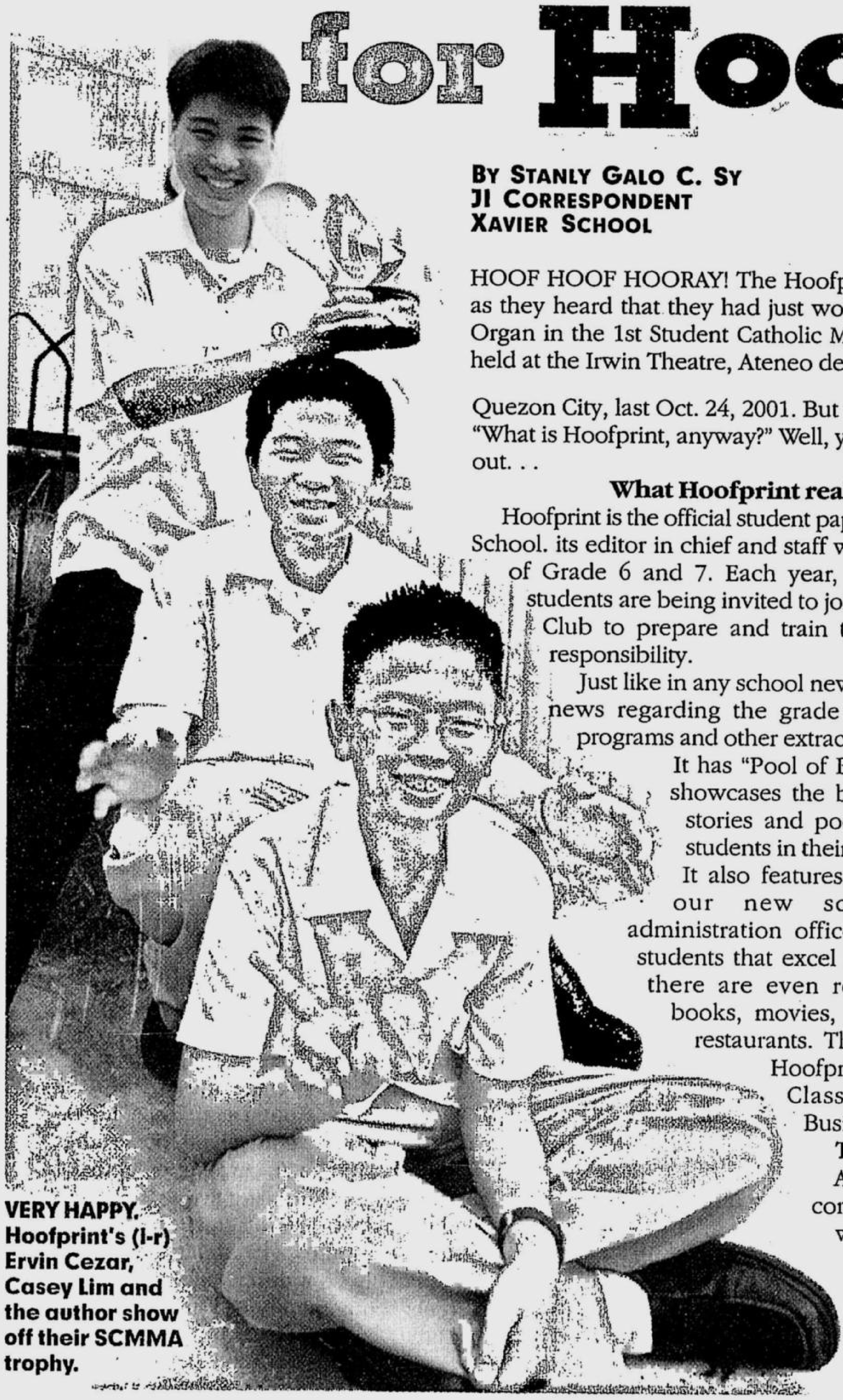
Hooves Up for Hoofprint!



VERY HAPPY. Hoofprint's (l-r) Ervin Cezar, Casey Lim and the author show off their SCMMA trophy.

By Stanly Galo C. Sy
JI Correspondent
Xavier School

HOOF HOOF HOORAY! The Hoofprint staffers yelled as they heard that they had just won the Best Student Organ in the 1st Student Catholic Mass Media Awards held at the Irwin Theatre, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, last Oct. 24, 2001. But wait, you may ask, "What is Hoofprint, anyway?" Well, you're about to find out. . .

What Hoofprint really is

Hoofprint is the official student paper of Xavier Grade School. its editor in chief and staff writers are students of Grade 6 and 7. Each year, selected Grade 5 students are being invited to join the Jr. Hoofprint Club to prepare and train them for a bigger responsibility.

Just like in any school newspaper, it features news regarding the grade school activities, programs and other extracurricular concerns. It has "Pool of Best Works" which showcases the best compositions, stories and poems made by the students in their Language classes. It also features personalities like our new school director, administration officers, teachers and students that excel in different fields; there are even reviews made on books, movies, anime, and even restaurants. The only thing that Hoofprint doesn't have is Classified Ads and a Business section!

The interview

And now, here comes my interview with the Hoofprint moderators, Mr. Alex Santos, Ms Therese Pelias, last year's editor in chief, Ervin Cezar and last year's assistant editor in chief, Casey Lim.

JI: How does it feel to be part of the magazine that had won Best School Organ in the 1st Student Catholic Mass Media Awards?

Casey: It feels good. I also feel proud for Hoofprint and I feel that all our hard work paid off.

Ervin: I was at the right place and at the right time that I got more than what I had expected.

Ms Pelias: It feels great because it comes after two years of working hard (for me). I feel so much appreciation.

Mr. Santos: I feel great because without the help of my talented co-moderators and staff, we wouldn't have pulled it off.

JI: When did you start writing (for school publications)?

Casey: I started writing since I was in Grade 2.

Ervin: I started when I was in Grade 4.

Ms Pelias: I started when I was in fourth year high school. I was part of our school paper in high school and in college.

Mr. Santos: When I was in college, I made comic books and then I started writing.

JI: Who were your mentors in writing?

Casey: I read a lot of books; Ms Pelias, Ms Cacacho, and Mr. Santos were also my mentors.

Ervin: Ms Pelias was my mentor. If it weren't for her accommodation, I wouldn't have joined the same club (Hoofprint).

Ms Pelias: So many teachers were my mentors. Like Ms Annie Chu, and Ms Gloria Jean Chavez.

Mr. Santos: I just kept reading books.

Hooves/p.10

WORLD SCOPE

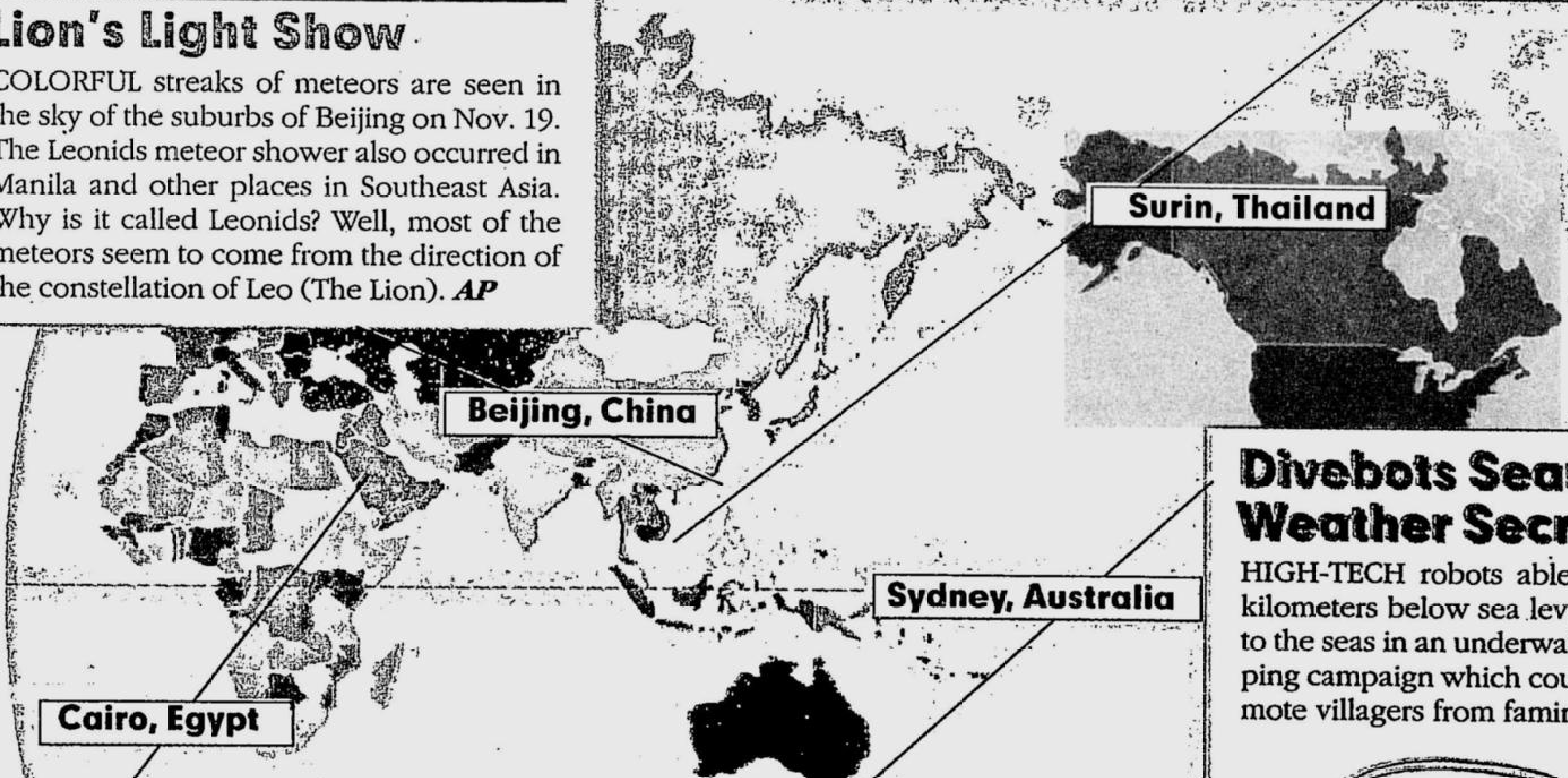
Lion's Light Show

COLORFUL streaks of meteors are seen in the sky of the suburbs of Beijing on Nov. 19. The Leonids meteor shower also occurred in Manila and other places in Southeast Asia. Why is it called Leonids? Well, most of the meteors seem to come from the direction of the constellation of Leo (The Lion). ***AP***

Pachyderm Soccer

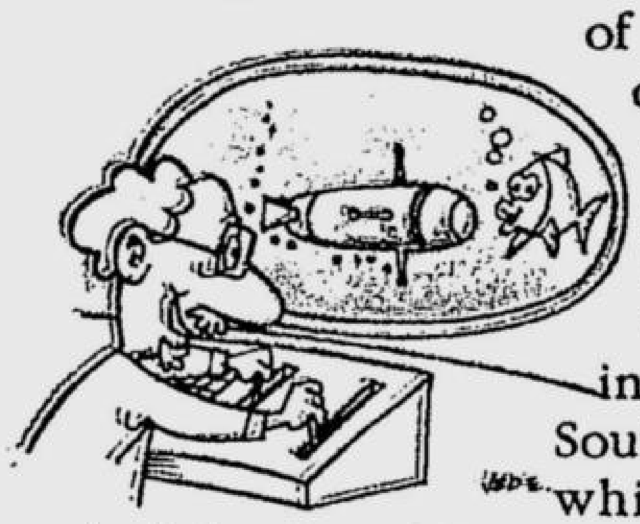
AN ELEPHANT jostles teammates during a soccer match. More than 250 elephants participated in the annual Surin Elephant Roundup where pachyderms display their dexterity and intelligence.

AP



Divebots Search for Weather Secrets

HIGH-TECH robots able to dive to two kilometers below sea level are being sent to the seas in an underwater weather mapping campaign which could help spare remote villagers from famine. Around 3,000 of the floating, diving robots will be placed by 13 nations in the world's seas, including the Southern Ocean which swirls around the Antarctic, over the next five years. The 1.5 meter-long cylindrical aluminum floats, valued at around $15,600 each, are sub-sea equivalents of weather balloons, drifting with currents at depths of two kilometers, surfacing every 10 days to send their data. The information, beamed to super-computers via satellites, will provide virtually continuous mapping of sea currents, temperatures and salinity, for the first time. ***Reuters***



Heliopolis Tombs

EGYPTIAN workers work on the site of recently discovered tombs in Cairo. The 26th dynasty (664-625 B.C.) tombs were discovered during an archaeological inspection of an empty plot of land in the populated Ein Shams district of northeastern Cairo where the ancient city of Heliopolis once stood. ***AP***

CAMPUS
NEWS

Any news from YOUR SCHOOL?
Young campus journalists can fax their typewritten articles to JI at 897-4793 up to 94. Include your name, school and contact number and be sure to write ATTENTION: JUNIOR INQUIRER on top of your article. See YOUR news articles on the Junior Inquirer!

My NAMCYA Day

BY MARIELLE S. DELA CRUZ
JI CORRESPONDENT
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES-INTEGRATED SCHOOL

EVER got to watch a prestigious musical contest? No? Well, I have. I had the extreme luck to attend the 2001 National Capital Region finals of the National Music Competition for Young Artists or NAMCYA.

I was very apprehensive yet excited too. I mean, you don't get the chance to listen to splendid, music and beautiful voices every day, do you? The competition was on Nov. 7 at the Chiang Kai Shek College Auditorium. There were 10 groups of participants present; eight for the Children's Choir competition and two for the Children's Rondalla competition. The winner of the regional finals was to advance into the National Finals to be held from Nov. 26 to Dec. 2 at the CCP.

Each of the eight choirs had 10-15 minutes to sing all the required songs. Each choir also had a conductor and an accompanist on the piano. They were judged according to the way they interpreted the different songs. And perhaps also for their costumes, because they really were very grand!

Pink was the color of the day. No less than three groups wore pink, although each was different in design, they still kind of looked the same to me, because most of the choirs wore Filipiniana costumes. One girls' choir wore this elaborate red costume with sequins, reminiscent of Mindanao, and another wore blue, while this boys' choir wore *camisa de chinos* paired with *maong*. Impressive all.

It was wonderful to watch these groups perform, and to watch out for the seemingly minuscule differences that distinguishes one choir's style from another. It didn't even bother me that the same songs were repeated again and again (repeat a song to me three times and I'll knock your socks off). It was also of course quite exciting to guess who would be the winner.

The winners

In the Children's Choir competition, the group that bagged the third consolation prize was the Bagong Silangan Elementary School Choir. The second consolation prize meanwhile went to the Tenement Children's Choir of the Tenement Elementary School. And the first consolation prize went to the Dominican Choir of San Juan.

The second honorable mention prize went to Koro Angelitos, the boys' choir with the cute identical green polo shirts. And the first honorable mention award was bagged by the Angelic Voices Choir of the Aurora E. Quezon Elementary School.

And the third prize goes to the Kilyawan Boys' Choir of Our Lady of Annunciation Parish along Mindanao Avenue in Quezon City. These boys won the crowd over with their original and ultra-cool rendition of "Sitsiritsit Alibangbang." They were conducted by Ms Hazel Copiaco. Good job!

And now, the second place goes to Les Children's Choral Group, conducted by Ms Mary Anne C. Villanueva. Wonderful!

The first place was won by the De La Salle Zobel Grade School Choir for their breathtaking performance. They were conducted by Ms Marites Panaligan, and these lucky folks will get to go to the National Finals this December. Way to go, guys!

The Children's Rondalla event was quite new to me. I've never seen a rondalla before. A rondalla is a sort of children's band, common in elementary public schools and they played all sorts of different instruments, like banjos, guitars, cellos etc. That's right, they played instrumental music. Kind of like a mini-orchestra, if you will.

For the Rondalla competiton, both the Las Piñas Elementary School Rondalla conducted by Elaine Cajucom and the Baclaran Elementary School Rondalla conducted by Adelaida Silario won, so I guess they'll go to the National Finals together. Congrats!

What is the NAMCYA?

According to Dr. Verne dela Pena, Secretary-General of NAMCYA, this nationwide competition began in 1972, devoted to discovering and developing the musical talents of Filipino children from all over the nation. A Presidential Proclamation by former President Ferdinand E. Marcos decreed the last week of November the National Music Week. This year's theme is "Kabataan, Kapayapaan at Musika."

NAMCYA explores the many different forms of Filipino musical prowess in its competitions. In the competitions, there are choirs, children's rondallas, ensembles, solo pianists and other solo instrumentalists. Traditional music plays a big part in NAMCYA, as it also aims to promote our nation's music among Filipinos.

For the Children's Choir competition, the groups were required to sing two pieces by two famous Filipino composers and one traditional folk song from the region. For the Children's Rondalla, the groups played two traditional pieces. For me, all were lovely!

All in all, the morning was fun, for all participants. I learned a lot from this experience. I can't wait to know what will happen next. Well, good luck to all the finalists. Give it your best shot!

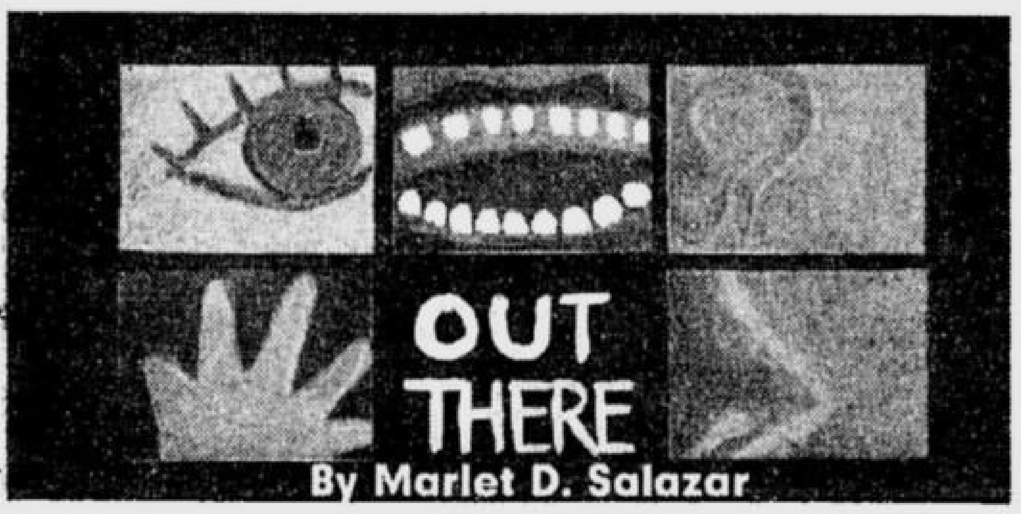
Activities

SPORTS FUN. Join the Youth Triathlon Series 2001 tomorrow at the De La Salle Santiago Zobel School in Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City. Activities include swimming, biking and running for ages 7-18. Exciting prizes await the winners. For more details call up 438-1702 or 0919-2693464.

DISNEY ON ICE. It's back! The yearly serving of Disney on Ice begins on Dec. 22 with loads of your favorite Disney characters. Watch Mickey, Minnie, Pinocchio, Buzz Lightyear, Woddy and characters from "Mulan," "A Bug's Life," and "The Lion King" will delight you with breathtaking skating production numbers at the Araneta Coliseum. Tickets are available at all SM Ticketnet outlets.

Cable Picks

WHAT'S ON AT NGC. Check out this week's line-up of exciting shows on National Geographic Channel.



By Marlet D. Salazar

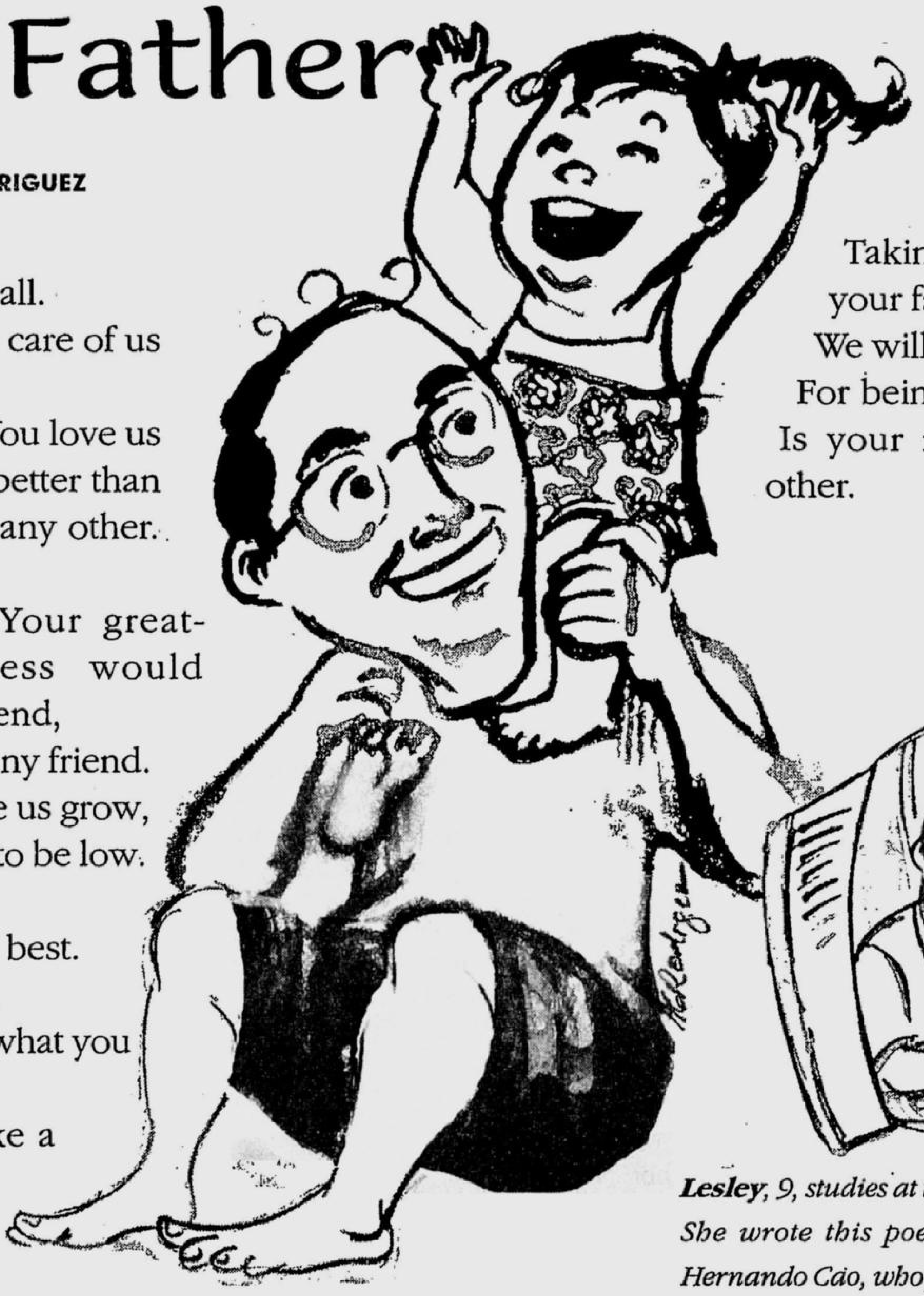
Got something for Out There?
Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and ad-

- **BEYOND THE REEF.** See beyond Indonesia's coral reefs on "About Asia." These coral reefs stand among the world's largest and boast an extraordinary diversity of marine life. Watch it tomorrow at 10 p.m.
- **AFRICAN ELEPHANTS.** Follow the life of over 2,300 elephants living in the Tarangire National Park in East Africa. "African Elephants: Giants of Survival" airs on Dec. 4 at 10 p.m.
- **CREATURES OF CORAL REEF.** Witness incredible life-or-death interactions between creatures of the coral reel on NGC's "Built to Kill" on Dec. 5 at 8 p.m.
- **DOGS WITH JOBS.** On Dec. 6 meet Fay Wray, a Weimaraner and canine Mona Lisa who lives on in artist's William Wegman's world famous photographs and remains his original muse to this day; Jake, a German Shepherd working with the Canadian Coast Guard and Toby, who makes random visits to schools to sniff out suspicious substances. "Dogs with Jobs" airs every Thursday at 9 p.m.

TITAN A.E. Will a young outcast in the year 3028 be able to save the human race through his father's spaceship? Watch "Titan A.E." tomorrow at 9 p.m. of Star Movies.

A Great Father

By Lesley Anne P. Cao
Illustration by Albert Rodriguez



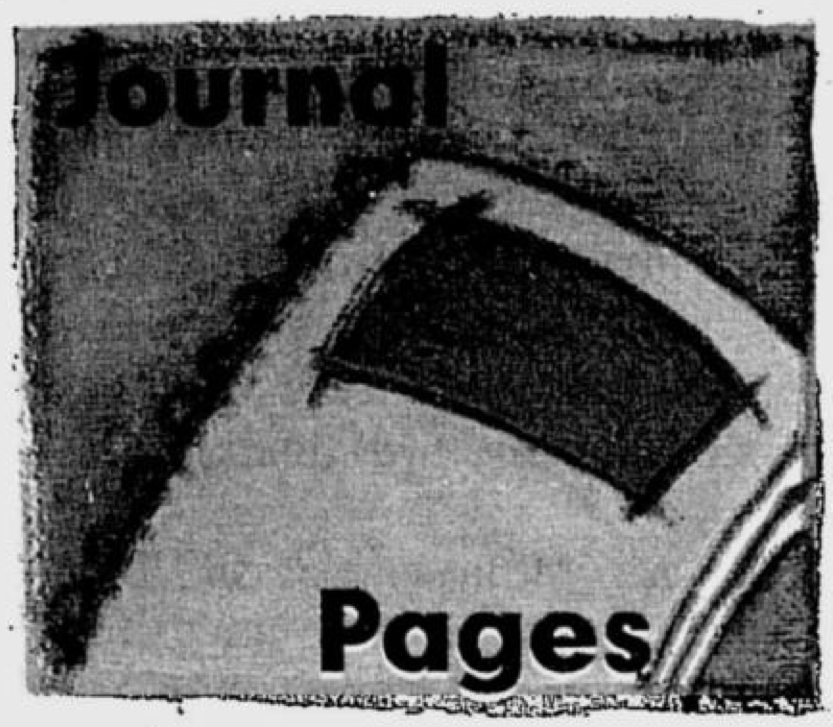
You are a great father,
Kind, loving, caring and all.
You do your best to take care of us
forever,
You love us
better than
any other.

Your greatness would
not end,
We love you more than any friend.
You do your best to make us grow,
You want our grades not to be low.

The way you care is the best.
Yes, we will let you rest.
You are yourself and do what you
want,
You want us to grow like a
plant.

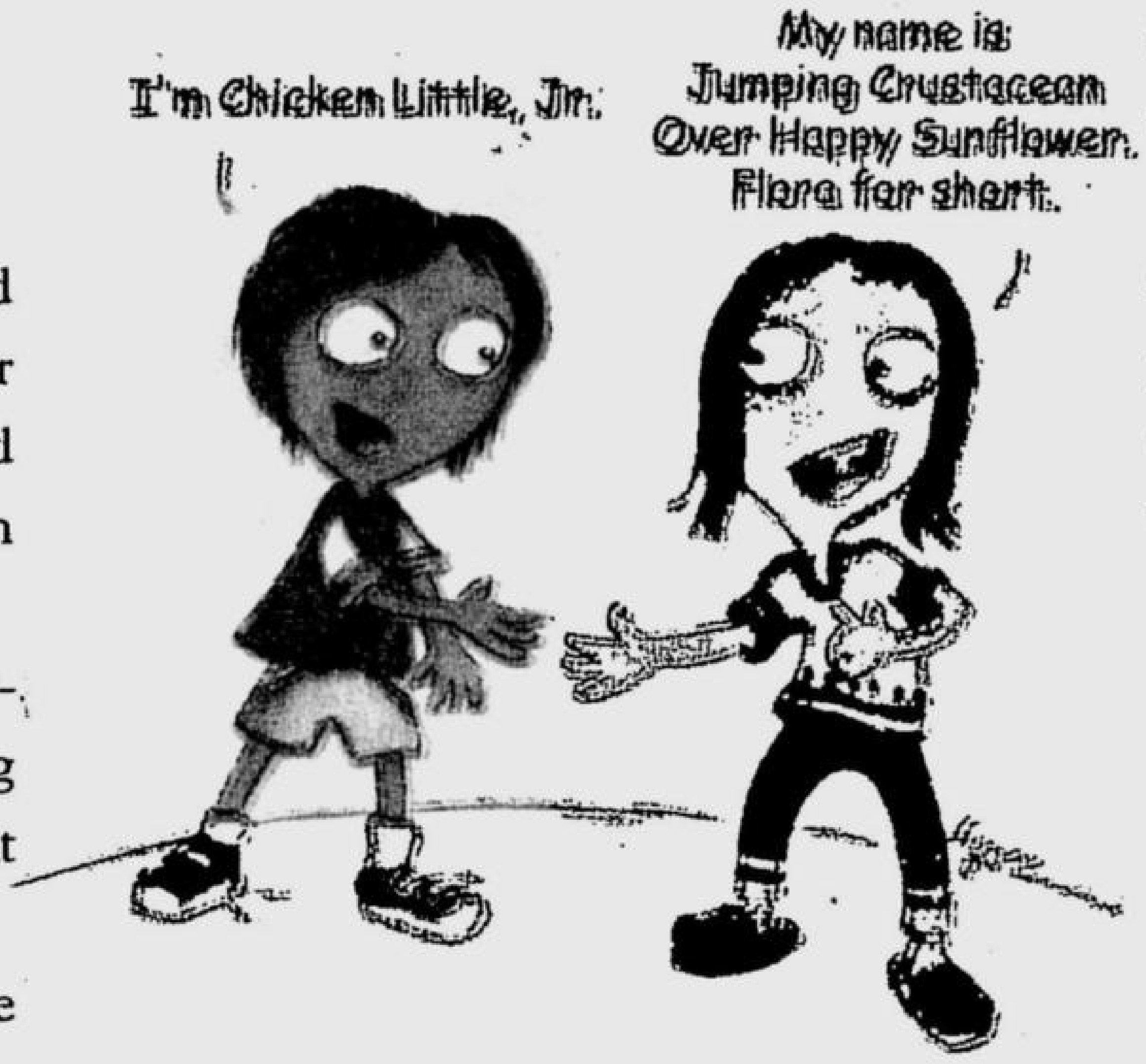
Taking care of
your family,
We will thank you happily.
For being a great father
Is your manner and none
other.

***Lesley**, 9, studies at the UP Integrated School. She wrote this poem for her father, Atty. Hernando Cao, who passed away this year.*
***Albert** is one of Inquirer's staff artist.*



What can I call you?

BY LEPHARGY C. GELLENA
THE GENTLE SHEPHERD SCHOOL
NOVALICHES, QUEZON CITY


I'm Chicken Little, Jr.
My name is: Jumping Crustacean Over Happy Sunflower. Flora for short.

YOU wake up one morning with the sound of your mom calling you, your name. Day after day, you hear your teacher saying this word that you respond to. Sometimes you hear it on TV and you proudly say, "That's my name."

What really is in a name anyway? Everything, plus the world. Some may mean one thing and some have a history. Others are the result of two names joined together.

My name is Lephargy and it has a unique story. It stands for Leoncio, Editha, Parencia, Azatona, Rodrigo and Graciano. These are the names of my parents and grandparents Phew! What a name, huh?

It was my dad who thought of putting the initials of all those people together. Cool, isn't it?

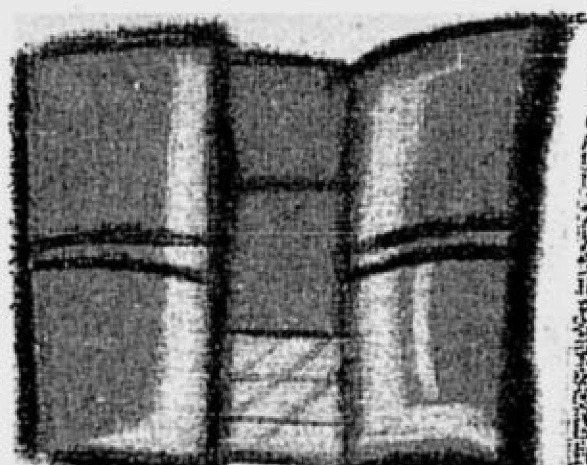
Some of the names may sound eerie to you. Or maybe they sound awesome. But in all, I think it's simply great.

But don't think for once that a name simply must sound grand, classic or incredible. It is the person who counts. Whatever your name is, carry it with pride! It's something that will be with you through thick or thin.

Sound Familiar?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers

You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is ji@inquirer.com.ph Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



JI, I Like!

Dear JI,

I like reading your poems and stories. This is my first time to send a letter. I'm a third grader. I also love drawing and playing. I also hope that you will make more and more Junior Inquirer. God bless!—***DIANE NICOLE GO***, *9, Immaculate Concepcion Academy*

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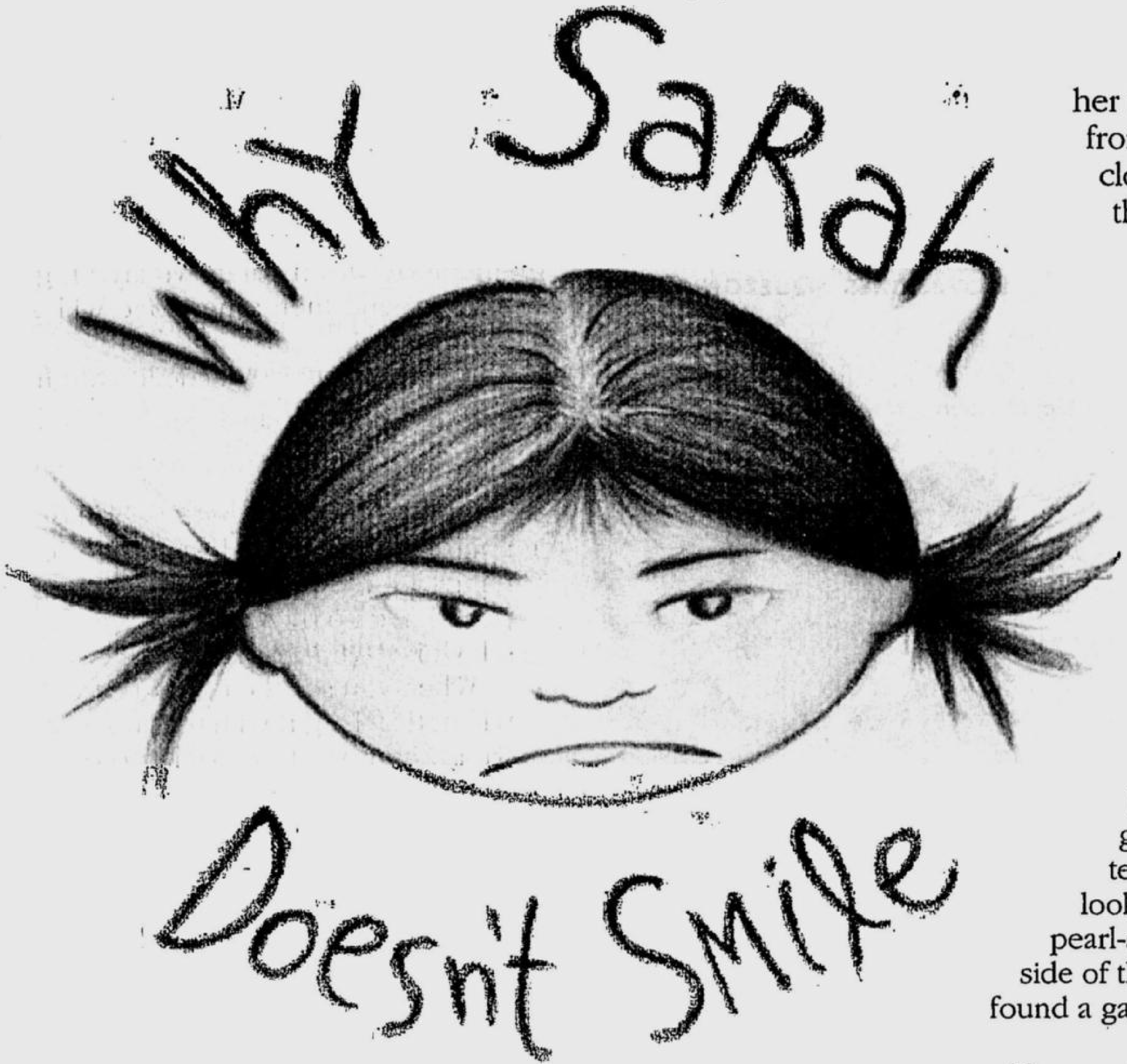
Why Sarah Doesn't Smile



STORY BY MAE ASTRID TOBIAS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY LIZA FLORES

"I AM not going to school to school today," declared Sarah while she picked on her food at the breakfast table.

"Don't be ridiculous," answered Mom. "You've been waiting for the first day of school all summer."

"I changed my mind. I don't want to go to school anymore."

"You have to," said Dad." Besides, you'll miss out on all the fun."

"And besides, didn't you say how much you miss Michelle and Clarice?" added Mom. "Aren't you going to be in the same class this year?"

Sarah frowned. Her parents were right. She has been eager to go back to school. She was starting Grade 1 this year and her two best friends were in her section.

But that was before last night. Last night, a terrible thing happened to Sarah. She just finished preparing her things for school. Her notebooks were already neatly packed in her knapsack. Her books were already wrapped in plastic and properly named. She even gave her new school uniform a last look for smudges, stains and creases. Everything was ready for her big day tomorrow—the first day of school.

When Sarah went to the bathroom to wash up and brush her teeth, it happened. She felt one of her two front teeth was a little wobbly. She looked closely at her image in the mirror and touched the tooth.

"Mom!" she called out. "My tooth is loose!"

Sarah's mom came over quickly to see what was wrong.

"Let's see," Mom said as she peeked inside Sarah's wide-open mouth. "You're right. Don't worry. It will come off on its own."

"Will it hurt?"

"A bit. Just brush your teeth extra carefully tonight."

Sarah did just that. She brushed her teeth slowly and carefully. She tried as much as she could to avoid the wobbly tooth. She tried to feel with her tongue if it was still there.

After a few minutes, Sarah finally finished brushing her teeth. She spat out the foam and gargled some water. When she spat out the water, she heard a small clink on the sink. Sarah looked at the sink. To her surprise, she saw a small pearl-sized tooth with a hint of blood laying on the side of the sink. She looked at the mirror in horror and found a gap between her teeth.

The next day, one the way to school, Sarah kept her mouth shut. She decided not to say a single word to anyone. Not until her tooth grew back.

When *Mang* Gary, the security guard greeted her good morning, Sarah only frowned.

When Teacher Lina said hello to her, Sarah waved but still did not smile.

When her two best friends, Michelle and Clarice finally arrived and greeted her with a hug, Sarah only mumbled a hello and walked away.

The whole morning in school, Sarah avoided her friends. She ate her sandwich alone in recess and quickly disappeared before everyone else was finished with their meals. Michelle and Clarice became worried when they couldn't find Sarah.

"Sarah's acting funny," Michelle said.

Clarice nodded. "Maybe something's wrong."

"Why doesn't she tell us?"

"I don't know. Maybe because we never asked."

"Then we should find her and try to cheer her up."

The two girls searched the school grounds to find Sarah. They knew she was no longer in the canteen because they have just been there. They looked in the library but it was empty. They looked inside their classroom but she wasn't there. Finally, they found her sitting alone on a swing in the playground, kicking the pebbles by her feet.

"Let's sneak up to her and tickle her," whispered Clarice.

Michelle and Clarice tiptoed toward their friend. Sarah, who was so sad and deep in thought, didn't notice the two girls moving behind her. When the girls were finally near enough, they pounced on Sarah like two lions making a kill. They tickled her all over—on

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said.
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tell us?"
don't know.
Maybe
cause we
er asked"

her side, on her tummy, on her neck. Sarah couldn't help laughing. She was laughing so hard, tears began forming in her eyes. Even the two girls were laughing together with her.

"Stop it!" she called out between laughs. "Stop it!"

When Michelle and Clarice finally got tired and stopped tickling her, Sarah began to cry.

"What's wrong, Sarah? " asked Michelle.

"We only wanted to cheer you up because you were frowning the whole day," said Clarice.

Sarah looked at her friends and smiled.

"I lost a tooth last night," explained Sarah. " I didn't want anyone to know that's why I kept my mouth shut all day."

"Me, too. I lost a tooth," Michelle grinned and showed a gap in her smile. "It fell off last summer."

"I didn't notice, I though I was the only one missing a tooth in our class."

"My mom says it's natural. We are all going to lose a tooth and then a new one will grow again."

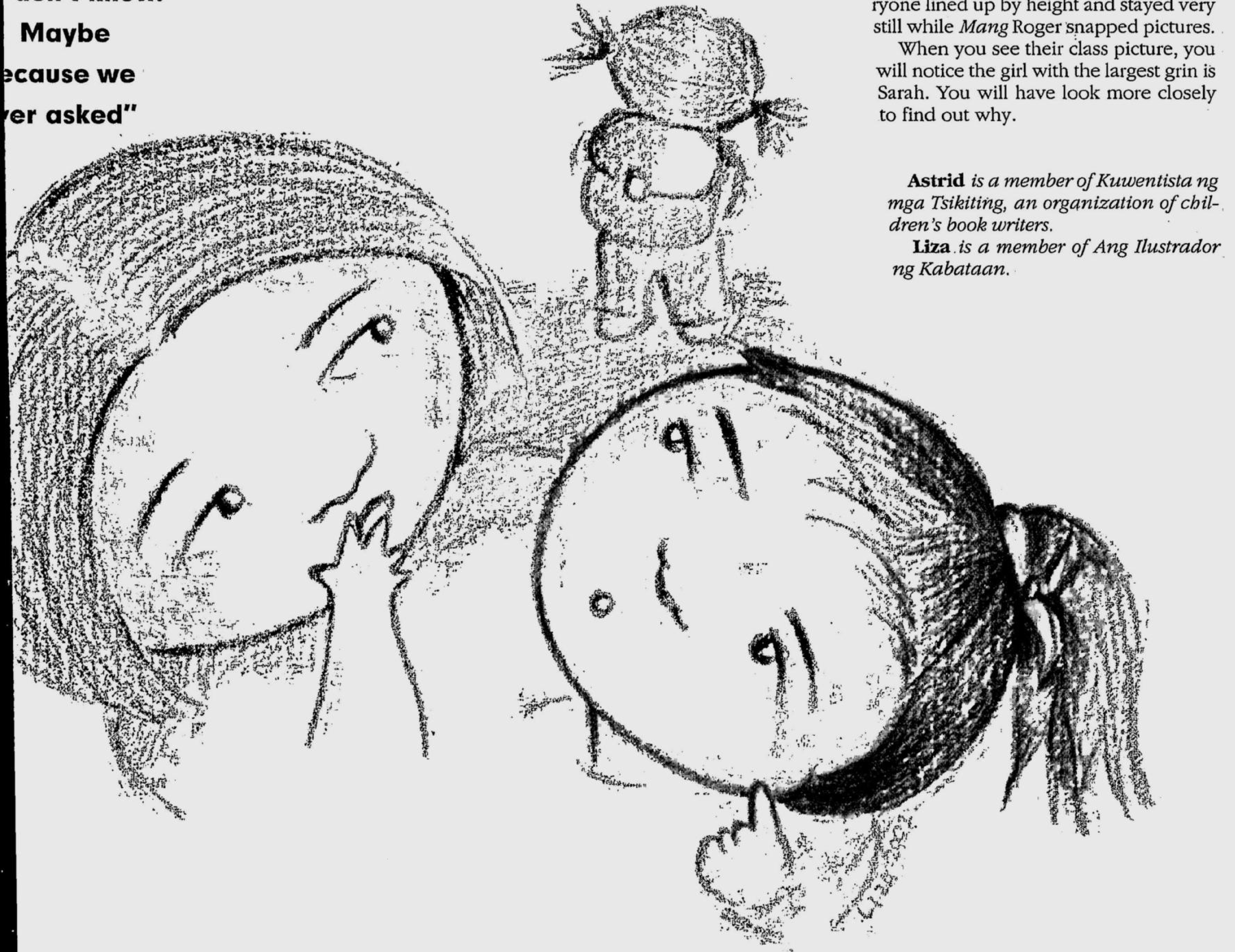
Seeing the gap between Michelle's tooth and hearing that her tooth will grow back again made Sarah feel better. She smiled at her two friends and returned with them to the classroom.

After several months, *Mang* Roger, the photographer, arrived in Sarah's school. He was going to take a picture of their class. Everyone lined up by height and stayed very still while *Mang* Roger snapped pictures.

When you see their class picture, you will notice the girl with the largest grin is Sarah. You will have look more closely to find out why.

Astrid *is a member of Kuwentista ng mga Tsikiting, an organization of children's book writers.*

Liza *is a member of Ang Ilustrador ng Kabataan.*



CHRISTOBAL'S Not So Small WORLD...

Eleven-year-old Christobal Flores gets the shock of his life when he finds out he writes very well

By Maria Zobel Certeza

WHEN I first met him, he seemed like a terribly shy kid. But after I had the chance to chat with 11-year-old Christobal Flores, my curiosity turned into amazement.

"I love to draw. I'd even buy things like figurines to imitate. I also love doing mosaic art and make it as our house décor," he told me.

Christobal didn't realize that he had a talent in writing until he joined the Probe Media Foundation and Unicef Journalism Camp for kids in Subic last October.

"My teacher asked us to pass an essay or a sample of our drawing for the camp's requirements," Christobal said as he scratched his head. "I didn't really expect that I would be chosen as one of the delegates from our school."

After meeting a lot of new friends and having fun during the camp, he was surprised all the more after being chosen as one of the section editors for the 5 and Up Club's official newsletter.

When I ask him how he felt after hearing his name called out as one of two feature editors, he said "I got really scared because I realized I was the youngest."

But Christobal said he felt challenged by his new position. "Because of that I really wanted to give it my best."

This kid believes that a journalist's job in giving information is one of the coolest jobs!

"They help people," he said, "and I'm glad that as a kid I was given a chance to help people by writing."

Christobal wants to be a scientist and an astrologer when he grows up. "I want to help people and discover medicines for some incurable diseases," he said. "I also want to explore the outer space and other galaxies."

Finally, Christobal has this to say to other kids who want to write well: "Just do your best. I think that's the reason why I got the editorial job, because I did my best. And always face the challenges that you encounter in your life and find strength in it. Also, have fun!"

Wow! Was that an 11-year-old talking?

unicef
KID
JoUrNaLisT

WRITER *PALA*. Since joining a journalism workshop, Christobal's world has been one pleasant surprise after another.

R U RRIFIC

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're `Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor.
Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!

Kids 'r'rrific
nomination form

I nominate: ____________________

Age: ________

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because:
(Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____

She/he lives at
____
____
____

and studies at
____

Her/his contact number is:
____

Sender's Name:
____

Sender's Age & School:
________, ____________________

Sender's Address:
____
____

Sender's Contact No.
____

Volleyball Paolo

BY MAE ASTRID TOBIAS

EVEN when Paolo Herras was still in grade school, he has always been playing volleyball.

"It's the only sport that excites me," he explains. "I try to imagine I'm a superhero and see how strong I can hit the ball."

In high school, he became captain of their volleyball team. He even joined the RP Boys Volleyball Team in 1999 to compete in Taiwan. Today, at the age of 20 and in his third year in college, Paolo is still dedicated to his sport. In fact, he is a member of the UP Male Volleyball Varsity Team. That means, he is part of the team that represents his school during inter-school tournaments like the UAAP. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Fridays, he trains alongside his teammates from 5:30 in the afternoon till 9 in the evening. In return, he receives a scholarship from the university.

"The scholarship is an additional bonus," says Paolo. "You should love what you are doing. I really love to play volleyball."

Another thing Paolo loves to do is writing. When he was only 17, he wrote a play, which he entered to the UP Writers' Workshop in Davao. The following year, he attended a scriptwriting workshop conducted by Ricky Lee. Last year, his script titled "Piso per Minute" landed third place in a scriptwriting contest he joined.

So how does Paolo balance his all his activities?

"I still cannot believe how I can juggle my writing, my studies, and my varsity," Paolo confesses. "I guess, with discipline, time management and knowing my real priorities."

Paolo also emphasizes the importance of enjoying what you do. "As long as you're happy with what you are doing—whatever sport, art form and even studies, then it is worth while."

DISCIPLINED. Paolo knows it takes a lot of spikes,..er, spunk to succeed in volleyball.

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

A.K.A. COOL
is an 'adult known as cool'
They're the folks
in our own family
Or the people
we meet in school.

I nominate ____________.
He/She is ____ years old and is my ____________.
Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:
1)____________;
2)____________;
3)____________;
4)____________;
and
5)____________.

My nominee lives at____________
____________.
Give him/her a call at____________
____________ or send him/her an e-mail
at____________.
By the way, I'm____________
____________.
I'm ______ years old.
My address is
____________.
You may call me at
____________.

Stanley, Ervin and Casey with Hoofprint moderators Therese Pelias and Alex Santos and Xavier's Jane Camacho.

hooves up...(from page 1)

JI: Did you ever expect to win?

Casey: No.

Ervin: No, because we were up against the Big League like UST.

Ms Pelias: No: We wouldn't know what to expect.

Mr. Santos: No, because we were competing with college teachers and students.

JI: Were you always interested in writing (for school papers)?

Casey: I always enjoyed writing.

Ervin: I was more interested in writing than in reading, but more on reading than public speaking.

Ms Pelias: I was interested in it since grade school.

Mr. Santos: I started loving the arts, but after getting exposed to writing, I was addicted to it.

JI: What kind of topics are you writing about mostly?

Casey: Anything but I enjoy, features and writing about things that I like.

Ervin: Anything new, extremely old and everything else that goes on inside my head.

Ms Pelias: Different kinds of topics like poems and essays.

Mr. Santos: Anything comical, horrific or just plain exciting and also human-interest topics.

The "Big League" Hoofprint was up against

Hoofprint was up against Inter NOS of UST Faculty of Sacred Theology, The Owl Magazine of UST Faculty of Philosophy Student's Forum and Vision of UST College of Architecture and Fine Arts.

What was up against them was the February 2001 issue of Hoofprint. It has articles regarding concluded school events like "Celebrating the entrance of the Snake," organizing the Smart Week in the grade school, "Developing a healthy addiction" by the Learning Resource Center. It also featured extra-curricular activities that taught Xavierans to open their hearts, heads and hands to help and to serve. The editorial touched on Edsa 2 and something on "To Forgive and to Forget."

And much to the surprise of the Hoofprint staffers and moderators was that they had won over the "Big Leagues." "Big Leagues" because the other finalists are all from college.

So once again, hoof hoof hooray for Hoofprint! Hooves up, Xavierans!

SCMMA

The 1st Student Catholic Mass Media Awards was launched last Feb. 7, 2001 at the Villa San Miguel. The CMMA strongly believes that the vision for an inspired, responsible, and excellent mass media must begin in the ideals and dynamism of the youth. Hence the CMMA took efforts to recognize these great youth minds that, at an early age, have engaged themselves in the vast world of social communications in their respective educational institutions as students.

Student journalists and communicators were recognized in various categories: Best in Public Service Print Ad, Best Photojournalist, Best Short Film, Best Literary Publication and Best Student Organ/Publication.

Harry Potter Quiz-1

"HARRY Potter" seems to be in everyone's mouth these days. But how much about him and his magical world is in your head? Take this initial test and find out if you're a wizard like Harry.

1. What's a Muggle?
● A bottomless beer container
● A non-magic person
● A word game played by wizards

2. What shape is the unusual scar on Harry's forehead?
● Magic wand
● Crescent moon
● Lightning bolt

3. Where in his Uncle Vernon's house did Harry live?
● Down in the basement
● Under the stairway
● In the doghouse

4. Dudley Dursley is Harry's:
● Nasty cousin
● Best friend
● Favorite teacher

5. What's the name of the train that takes students to Hogwarts, a school for young wizards and witches?
● Hogwarts Subway
● Hogwarts Skytrain
● Hogwarts Express

6. Where does Harry get his school supplies?
● They appear when he waves his wand
● In shops on a secret street called Diagon Alley
● He orders them from the World Wizard Web

7. What's the name of Harry's pet owl?
● Hedwig
● Merlin
● Athena

8. Who's the giant-sized but gentle Keeper of Keys and Grounds at Hogwarts?
● Humboldt
● Hagrid
● Hobbit

9. What sorts the students into the dormitories at Hogwarts Castle?
● The Sorting Hat
● The Thinking Cap
● The Master Brain

10. What's the name of Harry's pretty and often frisky girl friend?
● Hillary
● Hazel
● Hermione

11. What's Quidditch?
● A magical potion
● A wizard sport played in the air on broomsticks
● A monster that lives under Hogwarts Castle

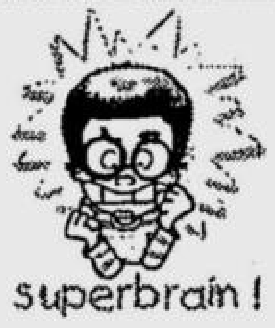
12. "Harry Potter" is the brainchild of author J. K. Rowling. What does "J. K." mean?
● Jill Kelly
● Joanne Kathleen
● Julia Kimberley

Answers :

1. A non-magic person or mere mortal
2. Lightning bolt
3. Under the stairway
4. Nasty cousin
5. Hogwarts Express
6. In shops on a secret street called Diagon Alley
7. Hedwig
8. Hagrid (fulll name Rubeus Hagrid)
9. The Sorting Hat
10. Hermione (Granger)
11. A wizard sport played in the air on broomsticks
12. Joanne Kathleen

Ratings :

11 - 12 ......



superbrain!

9 - 10 ......

6 - 8 ......

LEARNING at the PARK

Forget the mall. Go nature tripping on weekends

BY **MAE ASTRID TOBIAS**

LEMBO ROCK. The afternoon was also full of fun and games for the young and not-so-young.

HOW do you spend your Sunday afternoons? Do you and the family head for the mall and catch the latest flick? Or maybe just stay home and stay tuned to the tube? Here's a suggestion, why not head for the Rizal Park and commune with nature?

Say what? Yes, enjoy the flowers, sit on the grass, watch the butterflies flutter around, and maybe learn a bit about the environment. That's exactly how some children and their parents and teachers spent their Sunday last Nov. 11. The Clean and Green Foundation and the Center for Environmental Awareness and Education organized a one-day water festival titled "A Gift of Nature: A Water Celebration" at the Orchidarium and Butterfly Pavilion at the Rizal Park.

The activities centered on the conservation and the proper use of water. Unlike in regular classrooms, the children were asked to participate in the lectures so that they would understand the concepts better. For example, they played limbo rock to find out how our everyday activities affect the quality of the water we use. They also saw through a miniature model of a community how wastes coming from agricultural and industrial areas and subdivisions all accumulate in the same water sources.

The participants also got a grand tour of the Orchidarium and learned the interaction of the plants, water and animals. Aside for getting to know the different plants found in the Philippines, they got a chance to walk through a mini waterfall and saw a small imitation of a tropical rainforest.

Inside the Butterfly Pavilion, the kids and adults alike delighted at the sight of hundreds of butterflies that fly around and sometimes land of their clothes. *Kuya* June Alvarez, one of the guides explained that butterflies were very fragile creatures and they wouldn't survive in a dirty environment.

There was also a pond filled with *kiyapo*, or water lettuce, which is a plant that the town Quiapo was named after. *Kuya* June told the participants that long ago, the Pasig River was filled with them and were indications of a healthy river. Today, there were very few of them growing in the river.

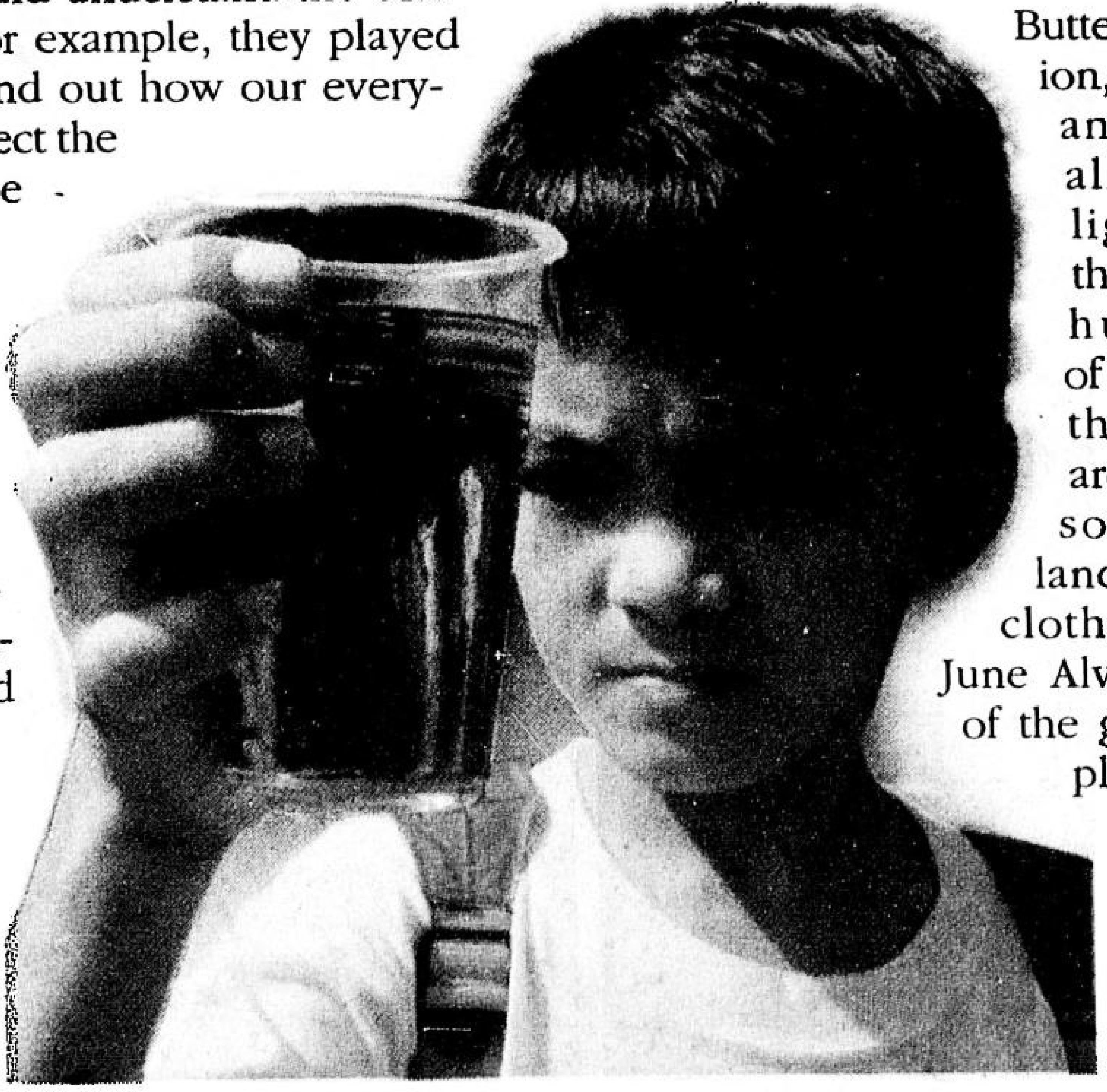
For 11-year-old Jerome dela Cruz of Acacia Elementary School, one of the important concepts he learned was caring for the Pasig River.

"We need to be the ones to care for Pasig River because we were the same ones who destroyed it," he said.

"Before I would throw away garbage anywhere," says 11-year-old Mary Rose Ponce of Maysilo Elementary School. "But I learned that what I was doing was wrong."

Kuya Bong Socco, another one of the guides explained that kids play an important role in raising the awareness for caring for the environment.

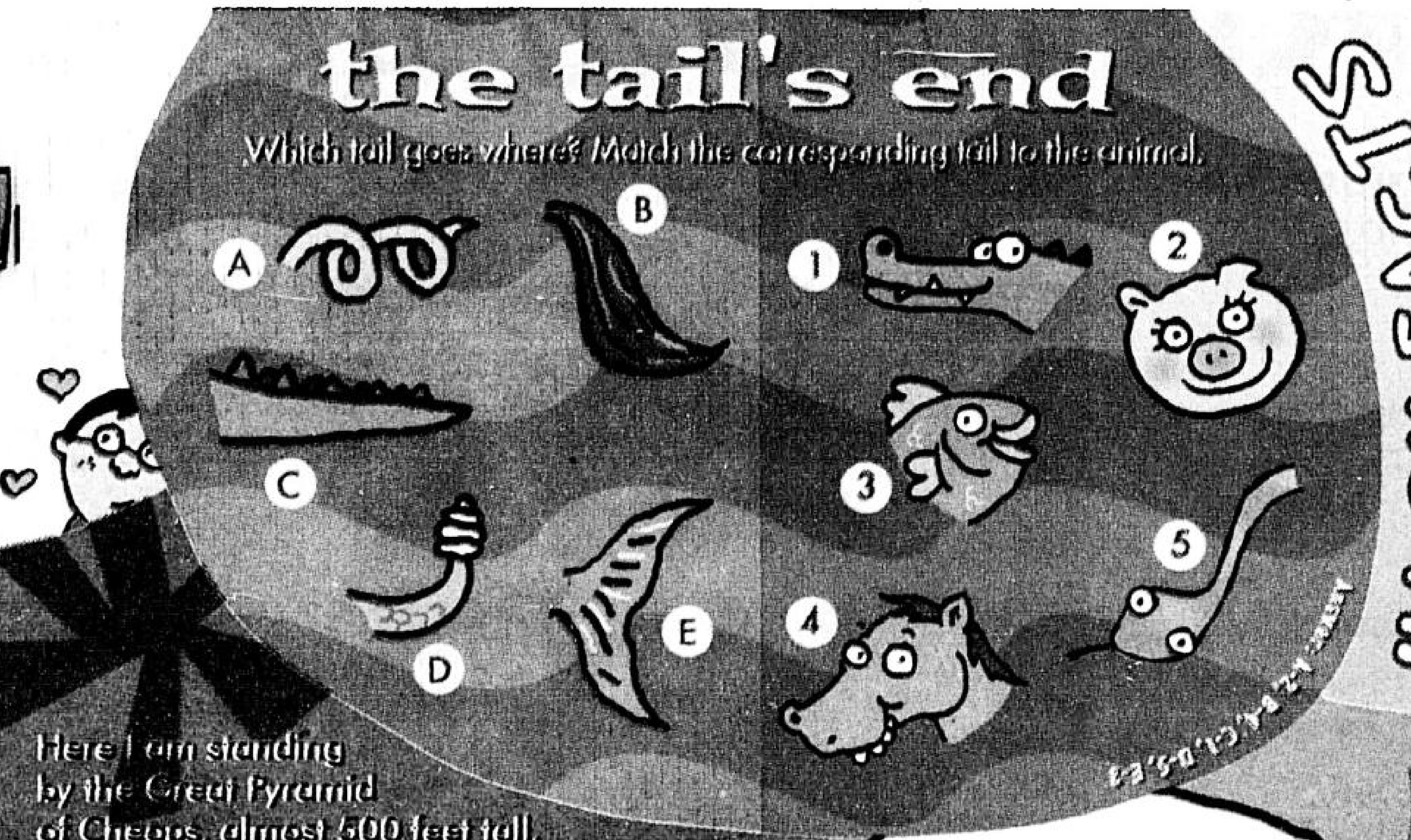
"There is more impact when children are the ones who educate the adults," he says. "From them, we are able to reach the parents, the siblings, and even the neighbors."



TIME FOR WATER. Get to know your H_2O.

THE LUNCH BOX

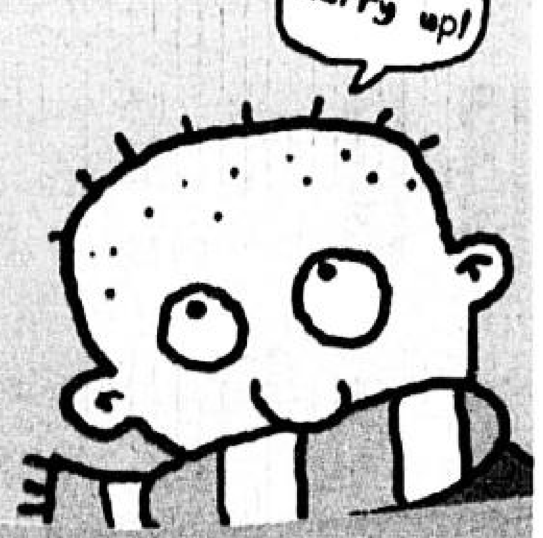
by Katrina B. Villa


the tail's end
Which tail goes where? Match the corresponding tail to the animal.
A
B
C
D
E
1
2
3
4
5

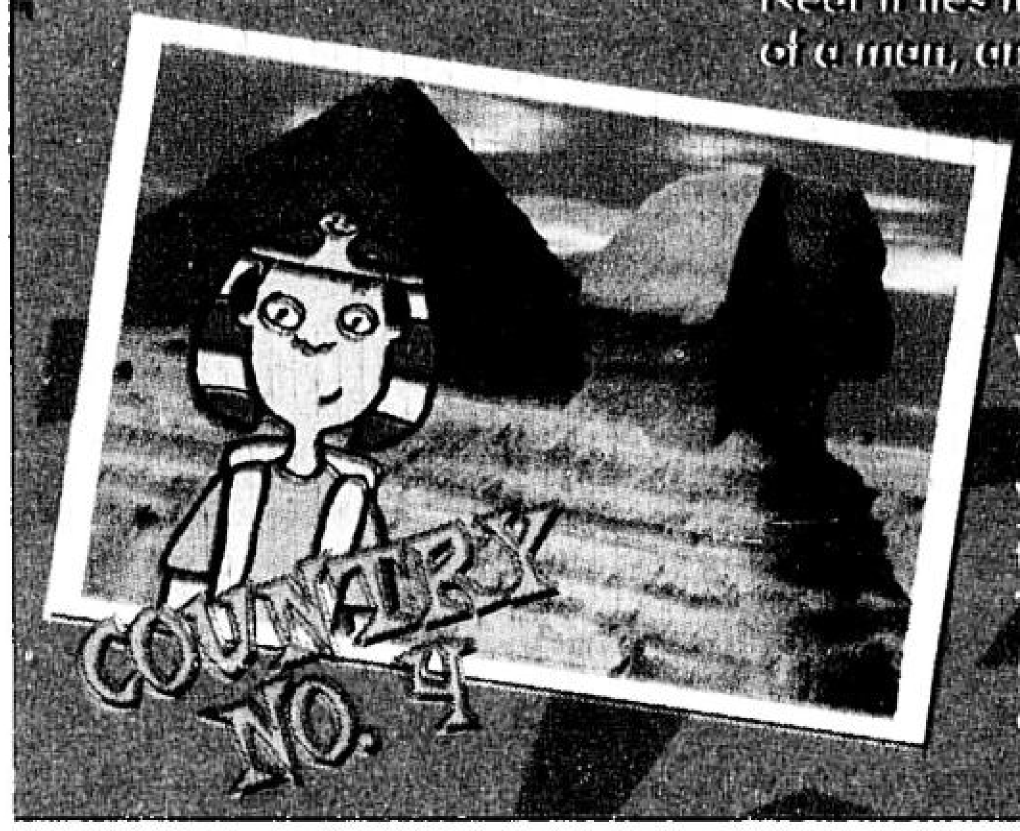
Answer: A-2, B-4, C-1, D-5, E-3

HAIRY FACTS

Human hair grows slower as the weather cools, while many animals develop thick coats.



NOY GOES ROUND THE WORLD


COUNTRY NO. 4

Here I am standing by the Great Pyramid of Cheops, almost 500 feet tall. Near it lies the legendary Sphinx, with the face of a man, and the body of a lion. These two structures are over 4,000 years old! By the way, do you like the headress I'm wearing?

WHAT COUNTRY IS NOY IN?

Write down all 5 countries he visits, then send your complete list to The Lunch Box, c/o the Junior Inquirer. List ALL 5 COUNTRIES correctly and WIN A PRIZE!

HUNGRY HELEN

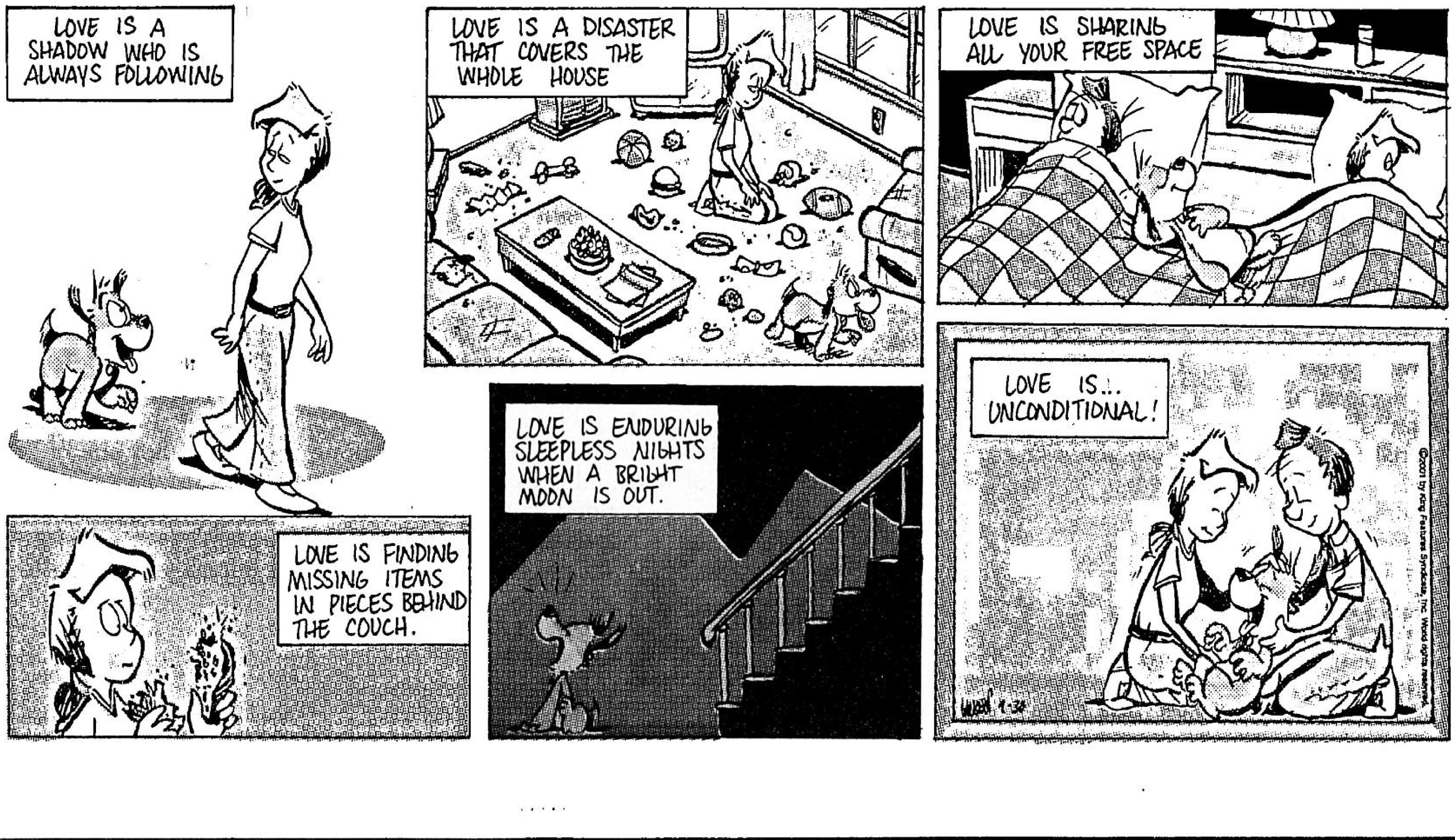
XBTI ZPVS IBOET CFGPSF FBUJOH!

Find out what Helen's mom said by replacing each of the letters above with the ones that come before them. for example, B becomes A, Z becomes Y.

Answer: Wash your hands before eating!

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT


LOVE IS A SHADOW WHO IS ALWAYS FOLLOWING
LOVE IS A DISASTER THAT COVERS THE WHOLE HOUSE
LOVE IS SHARING ALL YOUR FREE SPACE
LOVE IS FINDING MISSING ITEMS IN PIECES BEHIND THE COUCH.
LOVE IS ENDURING SLEEPLESS NIGHTS WHEN A BRIGHT MOON IS OUT.
LOVE IS... UNCONDITIONAL!

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